

Living the Word - Jeremiah 20: 10-13

How often do we struggle to keep God in mind when we're in adversity? There are occasions when it almost seems as though a plaintive cry to God is our only option, often our last one. And yet as the prophet Jeremiah reminds us today, the Lord is with us. We must be honest with ourselves when we're pressed – do we only turn to the Lord in times of trouble, or has he been on our minds and hearts throughout our days? The one thing our enemy is waiting for us to do is forget God and strike out for ourselves. This is emphatically something we should not do. So why does it happen so often, that we forget God and only turn to him in trouble? Consider your own prayer life. Does your day begin and end in prayer, and is there time for prayer in the middle of your day?

Elements of the Mass: Praying for Vocations

In praying for vocations, all of us should first remember that we are all called by God: in our baptism, he called us once for all into the eternal life of his Son Jesus, and into the family of his Church. So, all of us should ask 'Lord, who do you want me to be', and we should echo the words of the prophet Isaiah: 'Here I am, send me'. Within the Body of Christ, there are many different vocations, as St. Paul often reminds us, and none are less important or valuable than others: in particular, vocations to the Religious Life, that is to a life of prayer, under vows, should be considered and nurtured. And then, there are those whom God calls to serve his people in the ordained ministries of deacon, priest and bishop (the Universal Church can only recognise the priestly and episcopal vocations of men). Those ordained are called to share in the sacramental and teaching ministries of the Church. For the priest, this means, in particular, the privilege and awesome responsibility of presiding at the Mass: feeding Christ's people with his Body and Blood, and also offering them the forgiveness of sins in his name. There is no better place to pray for vocations of all sorts than during the Mass, where the whole people of God assemble together; and for priestly vocations, in the place where the ministry of a priest is seen to sustain the Church in the most vital way.

25th June 2023

Third Sunday after Trinity

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time



In today's Gospel the Lord Jesus urges the Church not to fear. 'Do not be afraid!', is his exhortation to us. It is a message that the Saviour often speaks, and the whole of the biblical revelation says the same, 'Fear not!' Fear is pervasive; we feel it in every place, at every time, and in every human heart. Where does it come from? Well, today's Gospel Reading gives us the answer: fear comes from the over-awareness of our mortal and finite nature. We all die, we pass away, we are as human beings transient and transitory creatures, and that is what frightens us most. Indeed, the whole world is as we are, transient: empires rise and fall, philosophies and political systems do the same. Nothing is constant or continuous in ultimate terms. It is an over-bearing and over-developed sense of that that begets fear in our hearts. But the Lord summons us to *fearlessness*. We Christians are and must be different precisely because we believe that our life is fundamentally different because of the uniqueness of Christ and the 'new life' we have received in him. Our life of faith, the sacraments, the sacred liturgy, our communion in the Holy Spirit: all of this has connected us to the life that passes not away, the 'Life' that transcends 'life'. We are rooted to God who alone has power over both the body (the realities that are passing away) and the soul (our deepest selves, which is immortal). God knows us and loves us with love unimaginable, and he guides us through this life in our earthly pilgrimage through the world to him in heaven. The only 'fear' we should have is 'the fear of the Lord', that is, an attitude of profound wonder and reverence for the very source and centre of our lives who is in every way Lord over us.

Today's Gospel: St. Matthew 10:26-33