

Homily of 10th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light for my path." We read in the second reading, "Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal." For me, for St. Francis of Assisi parishioners, and for everyone going through affliction, these words of St. Paul are, indeed, a lamp for our feet, and a light for our path.

Just as the winter cold was almost unbearable in the Providence House, the summer heat is causing us more affliction. We are making every possible effort to survive the months of summer. St. Paul says, "Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged." St. Paul calls what we are going through a momentary light affliction that will produce for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

In the first reading, Adam and Eve failed their trial. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. In times of trial, some people blame God, and some people blame other people. However, St. Paul tells us, today, not to be discouraged, but to be renewed by the momentary light affliction and gain eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. On the other hand, we can choose to be down and out. May it not be so for us.

In your faith and hopeful endurance some people may regard you and treat you as Jesus was regarded and treated in today's Gospel. His relatives set out to seize him believing that he was out of his mind. The Scribes said that he was possessed by an unclean spirit called Beelzebul. His mother and brothers, also, came and asked for him. Just like Jesus, in times of trial, 'relatives,' 'Scribes,' and 'mother and brother' will, definitely, appear to challenge one's faith. Jesus was not discouraged, and he encourages us to not yield to voices and pressures of discouragement but to remain steadfast and to continue to do the will of God.

How to remain steadfast:

First, prayer: Jesus says that it is only by prayer that certain demons are driven out (Mark 9:29).

Second, faith: St. John says, "The victory that conquers the world is our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Third, endurance: Jesus says, "The one who perseveres to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

Fourth, trust: St. Paul says, "We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Fifth, avoid wrongful and harmful solutions: Jesus says, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction" (Matthew 7:13).

Sixth, watch out for God's signs, and listen to wise counsels: God does not leave without us signs and guidance. They come to us through the Scripture, events, experiences and counsels. Prophet Amos says, "Indeed, the Lord God does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

Seventh, be calm and positive: The Psalmist says, "Be still before the Lord and wait for him" (Psalm 37:7). "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

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