

Homily of 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time of Year A



The two hands represent God's sustaining hands.
The heart under the two hands represents the loving heart of God.
The tree represents our parish community.
The leaves represent each one of us. Each leaf is a love symbol.
May genuine love shape us. Amen.

Psalm 133 speaks to the heart of our celebration. "How good and pleasant it is, when brothers and sisters dwell together as one... There the Lord has decreed a blessing."

The first reading says, "For my house shall be called a house of prayer." We are grateful to God for our church building which is a beautiful house of prayer. We have a beautiful candle prayer room in our church building. Please stop by, say a prayer and light a

candle. As the candle burns, your prayer is continuing in your absence. We have a Marian Chapel which is another place of prayer with the

Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Please pass by the chapel and say a prayer. Drop your prayer petitions in the receptacle by the altar. It is an expression of faith. If we kneel before God, we can stand before any situation.

Thank you for your generosity which has made it possible for us to install the new sound system. Thank you also for your generosity which has made it possible for us to purchase a new tabernacle, and many other items. All these make our church building a befitting house of prayer. Thanks to the deacons for their support and assistance. Thanks to all ministries. I am expressing my heartfelt gratitude to everyone. In one way or another, you all have contributed to making St. Francis of Assisi church a worthy house of prayer. I invite you all to continue to make this church look better and better. Please, bring your ideas and contributions. You may also ask me what needs to be done or sponsored.

Let us pray the prayer of Solomon when he dedicated the Temple. He prayed, "When a prayer or plea is made by anyone among your people Israel – being aware of the affliction of their hearts, by spreading out their hands towards this temple – then hear from heaven, your dwelling place" (1 Kings 8:38-39). As we stretch our hands in prayer in this house of prayer, may God hear us from heaven, his dwelling place. Amen.

The woman in the Gospel teaches us how to pray until something happens. This is called PUSH – Pray Until Something Happens. First, Jesus said nothing to her. She was not discouraged. Second, the disciples wanted Jesus to send her away. She was not discouraged. Third, Jesus put her to test with a Jewish proverb, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." The woman was not discouraged. Rather she replied to Jesus with a Greek proverb; "Even dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." The woman was a Canaanite. Canaanites spoke Greek. Jesus was amazed at her faith and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done to you as you wish." The reading concludes that "the woman's daughter was healed from that hour." What can I do so that my faith can amaze Jesus? Can Jesus say to me, "Great is your faith?"

If I remain anxious and worried, will Jesus say to me, "Great is your faith?" If I am full of doubt, will Jesus say to me, "Great is your faith?" If I have no quality time with God, will Jesus say, "Great is your faith?"

The woman in the Gospel teaches us to persevere in prayer and not to be discouraged. She teaches us to keep on praying until something happens. Therefore, keep pushing. Do not give up.

FR. MARTIN EKE, MSP