

## 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time(B)

I want you all to search deep in your memory banks and try to remember your childhood. This will be easier for some of you than for others. How many of you remember.. Winnie the Pooh? You know, the loveable plump little honey bear, who was the friend of Christopher Robin. And do you also recall Pooh's Pal, the donkey, Eeyore?

Eeyore was a prophet of gloom and doom. He walked around with his head down, just waiting for the next thing to go wrong.... I think his favorite expression was, "Things could be worse..... I'm not sure how..... but they could be."

Whenever I , or someone I know starts getting too pessimistic about things, I call that a case of Eeyore-itis. There has been a lot of Eeyore-itis going on through 2020.

And in today's first reading, poor Job has a profound case of Eeyore-itis. Listen again to his dirge, "Ohhhh Is not man's life on earth..... a drudgery????? My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; and they come to an end... WITHOUT HOPE. I shall not see happiness again."

WOW!!! This guy is a TOTAL Downer!

And, understandably so, I mean, we've all had bad days... but as he says, Job has been assigned MONTHS of misery.

But where I do have to take issue with Poor Job, is in his loss of HOPE. We have to always maintain HOPE.

In the Gospel reading for today, St. Mark is telling us about the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. He's been preaching the Good News in the synagogue, that's what the "word" Gospel means; Good News, and Jesus is filled with it. He's telling them that The Kingdom of

God is at hand. He preaches with authority, and then to give his testimony even more credence, He starts driving out demons, and healing the ill and lame. With all of these miracles happening, Soon, “the whole town was gathered at his door.”

And why???? Because Jesus offered them HOPE! Hope that He was the Holy one of God, which the demons he drove out knew him to be. They HOPED he could cure them, they HOPED He could free them; They HOPED He could lead them out of oppression. What they didn't realize, is that He was and IS even more than they had ever HOPED for. Because He could not only cure them of their ills, but he could save them from death. He could not only drive out demons, but He could defeat Satan himself and free us ALL from our sins.

Now, that is something to get excited about. That's Good News, and HOPE, that needs to be shared and PROCLAIMED.

Jesus tells us that this is the purpose for which He has come, and so they move on to the nearby villages, “that He might PREACH there also.

And St. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, tells us also that Preaching the Gospel, is his Purpose, and WOE to him, if he does NOT preach it. And he is so adamant and dedicated that he is willing to become a slave to all, so as to win over as many as possible. He has become all things to all people,... to all,... to save at least some. And he says, “All this I do for the sake of the Gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.”

Bothers and Sisters, are we preaching the Gospel? Do we share in its HOPE?

Now I don't expect any of you to become Oral Roberts or Tammy Faye... but we are ALL called to preach the Gospel. Evangelization is inherent in our baptismal duties.

So.... How do we do this?

St. Francis said, "Preach the Gospel at All Times..... and if necessary..... use words."

So, we PREACH the Gospel, by the way we live our lives. Day in and day out. The way we treat people, the way we carry ourselves; the witness we offer. The attitude we evoke.

Literally.....Everything we do,.... Preaches.....

So.... What is it?

Are we preaching..... Eeyore-itis?

Or are We preaching HOPE?