

The Paper Pulpit

(Reflections from the Pastor)

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Scripture: *This week's gospel is Chapter 11:28-30. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

It seems all of us have some sort of burden to bear, some sort of troubles and problems to carry with us. This text brings us some assurance that we are not alone with these burdens. There are many of us who face the burden of bodies that don't do exactly what we want them to do. Knees hurt, back aches, minds wander. Others face the prospect of living life alone after the death of a loved one. Still others have the burden of broken relationships with their children, their spouses or their relatives. Still others face the burden of making choices in this world. Maybe it's a decision your employer made that you don't like. Maybe celebrating the 4th of July is burdensome. Teens often are confronted with friends asking them to do things that they know are wrong: pressure to drink, do drugs or sexual activities; arguing or fighting with parents and siblings; pressure to perform academically or in sports; wondering what they will do with their lives; wondering when they do make a decision, if it is the right one. There are other kinds of burdens we face: burdens of sin, or temptation; burdens of guilt; burdens of conflicting loyalties; burdens of providing for our families. This life is filled with stress, with cares, with worries, with situations that call for us to make choices that sometimes are not pleasant to make.

Jesus is saying come to me all who are struggling with life in any way. He says, those of you who have burdens you cannot carry alone, I will help you with your struggles. Jesus knew that all people have a difficult path to follow in life. Life is not easy because we live in a world that is filled with sin. Sin makes life difficult for us because it has put into our world all those things that God would have kept from us because he knew these things would make life difficult. If we want to be like God, to know what he knows, then we have to know all the ways in which life will make us carry burdens, will load us down with problems, with guilt, with broken relationships, with not so perfect bodies, and a whole host of other things. But Jesus says he will help us, he will walk besides us, he will help us carry our load.

An unknown author wrote... Did you know that an eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks? The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it. The eagle does not escape the storm. It simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us - and all of us will experience them - we can rise above them by setting our minds and our belief toward Jesus. The storms do not have to overcome us. We can allow God's power to lift us above them. God enables us to ride the winds of the storm that bring sickness, tragedy, failure and disappointment in our lives. We can soar above the storm. Remember, it is not the burdens of life that weigh us down; it is how we handle them. We can try to solve the problems in our lives ourselves or we can place them in the hands of Jesus. I place my trust in His hands, how about you???

Bible Study and just a good ole discussion of the faith and topics that affect us as Catholics in society: I will be hosting a study of the bible (but a whole lot more than a bible study) of our faith during the last three Tuesdays in July and the first three Tuesdays in August. The format will begin with Mass at 6:00 followed by supper (brats and burgers or you can bring along anything that can be grilled) at 6:30. Then we'll have a discussion on a variety of topics around the fire pit at the rectory. A great way to meet others in the parish. All ages are invited. Refreshments will be provided. There will also be activities for the kids. We got a basketball hoop, and volleyball and badminton nets. Since I'll need to know how much food to have, there will be a sign-up sheet in the gathering space. Come to one or come to them all. See me for more details.

God's Blessings, Fr. Jim Trempe