

## Homily Resources - 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time B 2021

Readings: 1st Job 7: 1-4,6-7, Psalm 147, 2nd 1 Cor 9: 16-19, 22-23, Gospel Mk 1: 29-39.

### 1. Central Thought: Living by faith while we are in the midst of pain and suffering.

### 2. First reading: Spiritual war caused by the presence of evil in the world.

For the bet between God and Satan on Job's faith and righteousness, see Job 1: 1-12. This book raises the question of whether we will be faithful to God only if he blesses us with prosperity. Will we be faithful if all kinds of misfortunes affect us, even if we suffer a lot? Are we just "fair weather Christians"? Our reading comes from Job's first answer; his response to Eliphaz, who has accused Job of being unjust, since God would never punish the righteous. Job neither admits to personal sin, nor blames God.

**3. Job talks about his life in dramatic and pessimistic terms.** Under the severe attack of Satan, Job considers his life as a struggle, as a slavery, as a job that has been imposed on him. He sees no hope or improvement in the future. He refuses to accept the blame for the wrong he has not done (6: 28-30) and refuses to blame God, but no improvement or deliverance seems possible. In reality, this writing deals with the expression of a heart afflicted by sadness, penetrated by suffering and crying out to God from his own misery. It also represents the situation of the oppressed with Jesus.

**4. Coping with adversity:** Being able to cope with adversity successfully is very important. Usually we are not struck by an overwhelming disaster like Job. But we often feel that this is true, because if a part of our life collapses, it seems that everything is falling, that everything is lost. We need to keep an eye on ourselves and others for this danger.

**5. False fronts and false appearances, being sensitive to the situation of others:** It is often difficult to detect such discouragement and despair in others. It is important to be open enough to seek guidance, advice from God and his people. (Note Job's discouragement in verse 7: "Remember that my life is like the wind; I will never see happiness again.") How easy it is to believe that the sun will never rise again and that the rain will continue forever.

**6. Psalms as a source of encouragement:** This psalm shows us how one can go from this desperate lament to a deep trust in God. "Praise the Lord, who heals broken hearts." Let's have God's Word ready to encourage others in every situation! The Bible, especially the Psalms, offers us a rich selection of prayers of people in the midst of tribulation.

**7. Second reading: Saint Paul is a good example of a man who, responding to Jesus with faith, is called to suffer much.** His response to this suffering is neither discouragement nor withdrawal, but courageous and generous, going from city to city, from affliction to affliction, driven by his faith in Jesus to preach the Gospel and build the Church. How important, then, is the preaching of the Gospel and how well Saint Paul does it even when he suffers a lot (See 2 Cor 11,16-12,10). He has a spiritual outlook with a strong faith.

**8. Gospel: Here Jesus is ministering to those who, like Job, are sick or possessed by demons.** Jesus is clearly the answer to the attacks of the Evil One. The solution to these struggles against demonic powers is faith in Jesus, like faith in God. Job never lost his faith in God, although he could never understand why such terrible things could happen to him. Jesus transforms suffering, conquers evil. He is the deliverer in the deepest sense of the word. Jesus is the Redeemer who must announce the Good News for all the cities of Galilee. He goes through Galilee preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons, because for this he has come.

**9. I want to reflect on three levels.** First, in this world we experience many difficulties and sufferings. Second, in the face of these difficulties and sufferings, as Christians we must respond with a courageous and generous lifestyle of faith. We should be imitating Saint Paul, offering ourselves to

serve and help others. **And third**, to sustain ourselves in this radical lifestyle, imitating our Lord Jesus Christ, we need a strong practice of prayer.

**Let's reflect for a moment on each of these issues.**

**10. There is certainly a lot of suffering in life.** One of the most common facts of our human existence is human suffering. This suffering is found almost everywhere. See Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), # 164 - The Test of Faith. This may be caused by Satan, but we have the presence and power of Jesus with us. We also have the vision of heavenly fulfillment which Job did not have.

Luminous by the one in whom he believes, faith is often lived in darkness. Faith can be put to the test. The world we live in often seems very far from what faith assures us; the experiences of evil and suffering, injustice and death seem to contradict the good news, they can shake faith and become a temptation for it. "

**11. Example, marriages.** What kind of marriage results from a person living in the sins of individualism, hedonism, and minimalism (See Kelly, Ch. 2, The Pervasive Philosophy)?

**12. In facing such challenges, we want to have a positive, courageous lifestyle, generous and firm because we are full of faith in the power of Jesus.** We can live like this because we know that we have a promise of eternal life in heaven.

**What kind of work ethic, life style, do we have?** In our work? Towards our family? Towards our studies? Towards all of life? To what extent do sufferings or difficulties intimidate us, inspire us?

Let us think of Saint Paul on his missionary trips? To see how he suffered read 2 Cor 6.

Despite all the mistreatment he received, he continued to preach the Gospel and holding himself. Value of the weekday masses with the lives of the saints.

**13. How can we cultivate a life of prayer to sustain ourselves in a life worthy of Christ?** See Catechism, Part IV, especially ## 2558-2565 and Matthew Kelly, ch. 13, "The Daily Prayer." How is prayer in our lives? How do we pray? How often do we pray?

Different types of prayer:

Traditional prayers (Our Father, Rosary, Psalms, etc.)

Mental Prayer (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) (FACTS)

Meditation and contemplation and silence

Mass and Liturgical Prayers, the Liturgy of the Hours

**14. Conclusion:** Are we prepared to be disciples who can be faithful in the face of adversity and suffering and be equipped to encourage others? If we are close to Jesus, we can deal with anything!

15. For reflection and meditation at home.

1. Am I a person who fundamentally seeks pleasure and what I want (selfishly) or am I the type of person who goes in search of opportunities to engage with others and love them with the love of Christ, even if it costs comfort and suffering?
2. In my marriage, am I (are we) primarily seeking the satisfaction of our own desires or are we committed to loving our partner until the end of life, helping him or her win heaven?
3. What is my lifestyle? Is it selfish, to seek to be number one or to serve as a sacrifice, to seek the good of others in a courageous, disciplined and generous way?
4. How is my (our) prayer life? How do we need to grow? How could the Church help us in this? Do I pray the Psalms?