

## **19<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Ordinary Time (C)**

### **Do Not Be Afraid Little Flock**

Wisdom 18:6-9; Psalm 33:1,12,18-19,20-22; Hebrews 11:1-2,8-19; Luke 12:32-48

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Let us listen once again to the words of Jesus in the Gospel: "Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

These words of our Lord reveal his closeness to the "little flock" -- the little ones of God. I find this as a spiritual endearment being chosen by the Lord. Who are the little flock of the Lord? The Lord chooses them and those who choose to be humble and meek in the name of our Lord Jesus. They are those who put their lives in the hands of God.

What happens when we choose to be part of the "little flock"? We entrust everything to our Heavenly Father, who knows our needs and our lives. By putting our trust in Him, we develop a habit of prayer. The most profound moments of prayer in my spiritual journey have been in the early morning and just before I go to sleep.

Imagine a child waking up in the morning, immediately adoring their father, hugging and kissing him, and saying, "I love you, Father." If this simple act of affection can bring joy to an earthly father, how much more will our Heavenly Father be pleased?

As soon as you wake up, take a moment to pray as a member of the "little flock." This simple act will influence your entire day. And in the evening, before you sleep, remember to say, "Into your hands, Father, I commend my spirit." We never know what the next six or seven hours will hold while we sleep, so we entrust ourselves to the Father.

This simple habit of prayer nourishes our faith. We aspire to deepen our faith as profoundly described in the letter to the Hebrews from today's second reading. It states that faith is the confident assurance of what we hope for and the conviction of things we do not see (cf. Heb. 11:1). This assurance and conviction come from our belief that Jesus has secured our salvation, that God's Kingdom is present here on earth, and that all of God's promises—where we place our hope—will undoubtedly be fulfilled.

Our certainty does not come from scientific evidence, but from the unwavering promises of a faithful God. As a result, we are confident, assured, and convinced, holding onto a sure hope that victory is already ours, even now. To illustrate this, Paul refers to the example of Abraham. God called Abraham to journey to the promised land, and in faith, he set out without knowing where he was going—it was like walking in "zero visibility," where the path ahead was unclear.

God made a promise to Abraham, and because of that promise, Abraham left his hometown and began to live as a nomad in a tent. He was always on the move, looking toward a city that was founded, designed, and built by God. Although he never saw that city or arrived at it, his life was filled with challenges, and he had every reason to doubt. He had been promised descendants as numerous as the stars, yet for much of his life, he didn't have a child with Sarah. When he finally did have a son, he was asked to sacrifice him to God.

Despite these trials, Abraham persevered because of his dream and the promise of a future settlement that he never experienced in his lifetime. He held onto God's promise, which serves as a powerful example of the impact that a promise can have in a person's life. Ultimately, he trusted God.

Having Faith is not simply believing many different things, like doctrines, dogmas, teachings, and laws. But instead, Faith is a trust in someone, that is, in God and in the person of Jesus, whom God sent; a trust in someone who gave his life for us on the cross and still gives himself through the Holy Eucharist; a trust in someone who promised: "I will be with you till the end of time."

So that, no matter what, in the face of the unknown, the uncertain, and even the seemingly impossible, we continue to believe in, to trust in God who is faithful to his word. God is trustworthy, and in this trust, we find our security and confidence.

The Gospel teaches us the same thing in a story, which is a positive portrayal of the hopeful expectancy of a faithful servant looking forward to his master's return; a strong confidence of a faithful servant who is prepared and patiently waiting for his master.

Faith is confident assurance concerning what we hope for and conviction about things we do not see. When we understand Faith in this truly scriptural sense, we see how powerful and peaceful a gift from God it is. It instills hope, giving us the strength and courage to live life to the fullest even amid "zero visibility."

Amid all the questions, doubts, misgivings, and ambiguities that we all know are a regular part of our lives, and amid all the horrible things that happen in the world, such as natural disasters, wars, and personal tragedies, that can challenge our Faith, but in the midst of all these, we don't just pray for clarity, we pray for trust. Fear will have no place in the lives of the little flock, and anxieties of this world will hold no power over them. St. Paul passionately stated in his letter to the Romans, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

Hold on to the promise of Jesus to you and make it part of your reflection this week:

"Do not be afraid any longer, little (your name here),  
for your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom."

Fr. Manny Hewe  
Pastor