

Christ Our Hope Catholic Church

Faith In Laity Corner



22nd Sunday Ordinary Times

Why The Struggle?

Reading: Jer. 20:7-9; Rm. 12:1-2; Mt. 16:21-27

Few people can avoid or pretend that over the past few weeks there has been no end of hardships for so many people, not only in the United States, but so many around the world. Television and internet brought news directly into our homes, and there is no doubt that our sense of compassion has reached high level. We all can say clearly that somehow we the faithful can believe and feel that God ‘caught them’.

*“You seduced me, LORD, and I let myself be seduced;
you were too strong for me, and you prevailed.” (Jer. 20:7)*

On this 22nd week of Ordinal church times we search in the Scripture readings for answers to what we have been seeing. God took over in our lives and He allowed nature and the actions of people to have profound effect on so many of us across the world. It would appear that God allowed in our imperfect, stressful life to make room for more. We see thousands in Louisiana, California, Texas and far places like Sierre Leone, Burma, Pakistan, Brazil, Hong Kong recognize that the place we feel most safe would be destroyed by fire, floods or mudslides. Are we being prepared to go one step further in unwanted suffering?

*’Whenever I speak, I must cry out,
violence and outrage I proclaim.”(Jer.20:8)*

Our lives reflect the times we live in, our not too far different from the violence and outrage during the time of Jeremiah or even Jesus. Acceptance of the pain is difficult most times making

us feel that we don't want to suffer. We don't want to suffer. It is our hope that with the right prayers pain, worries and struggles will be turned away from us. When this does not happen

*"The word of the LORD has brought me
reproach and derision all day long." (Jer. 20:8)*

We feel that only recourse is to pretend there is no longer a need for His help or do we want to avoid being around Him.

*"I say I will not mention Him,
I will no longer speak in his name." (Jer. 20:9)*

It is the hope that slowly one will be able to rationalize that avoiding and separating ourselves from the God who created these conditions in which we find ourselves willing to

*To offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship." (Rm. 12:1)*

But the question may arise: How do you as a praying person, after weeks of avoiding God and making excuses not begin to feel a longing to even argue with God and to ask Him why this level of suffering? We are allowed to ask God the tough questions, we are to ask God why this suffering? We have to remember that

*"Jesus began to show his disciples that
He must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders,
the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed." (Mt. 16:21)*

Peter acting and thinking as we do; put off the fact that suffering was part of the earthly struggle.

"You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." (Mt. 16:23)

Thinking that as it related to the Son of God.... Surely God's Son would not be treated as we humans are!!

"No such thing shall ever happen to you." (Mt. 16:22)

Yet, Jesus states clearly that questioning God and feeling neglected is part of our human experience, but suffer and struggle we must. Does God hear our prayers? YES. Does God see our struggle? Does He feel our pain? Yes, He does.

*“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross, and follow me.” (Mt. 16:23)*

We are only going to reach our final destination through our long suffering and dependence on His Divine Mercy, may this take us through. We are in the struggle to the end!!!



We remember our relatives and friends in Texas, Louisiana and California those who suffer undetermined losses, may our generosity and prayers bring support during these difficult time. Let us continue to pray for the victims of mudslides and more flooding in Sierra Leone, Pakistan, Australia and Hong Kong.

Faith in Laity Corner is a weekly review of Sunday’s readings written by
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