



12th Ordinary Sunday B—Fathers' Day

Once, there was a man having troubles in his family, so he went to a Rabbi to find the solution to all his problems. The Rabbi told him to bring a glass of water and he would bless it, and he could then drink it and all his problems would be gone. As he was going to get a glass of water, the Rabbi said, “Wait! I did not tell you where to get the glass of water. You will need to get it from a family in your town that does not have any problems.” The man could identify about five families that he thought had no problems. He went to the first and explained what he was looking for. The family invited him in and explained to him all their troubles. It was the same with all the other families he talked to. So he went back to the Rabbi without a glass of water. He told him that he now realized that his problems were not much compared to others’.

The first reading tells us how the Lord speaks to Job, whose life was devastated by storms of illness, the deaths of his dear ones and the total loss of his possessions. “Out of the storm,” God reminds Job that He is in control. And in the Gospel of today, we find the disciples in the middle of a storm in the Sea of Galilee. It is actually a lake that is 13 miles long from north to south and 8 miles broad from east to west at its widest and it is notorious for its sudden squalls. Galilee is 685 feet below sea level and surrounded by mountains. As the warm air rises in the evening, cool air rushes down from those mountains and, in almost an instant, the calm water is transformed into dangerous waves. Jesus basically tells his disciples that he is in control and that they do not have to fear anything with him at their side. However, he demands faith on their part.

Those disciples were expert fisherman, and they were used to storms. However, this storm surprised

and terrified them—and they realized their helplessness. As we make our life’s journey in the boat—the Church—we, too, will face the storms of life. And, when faced with troubles, do we worry? That is a sign that we need to come to Jesus with our troubles and strengthen our faith. He has the power to calm our storms and instill peace. It is when we are in the middle of storms that we realize our helplessness and our need for Christ. God does not abandon us in troubles. We need to have faith and trust in Jesus.

We are celebrating Father’s Day today, and fathers have tremendous influence on their families, especially in the lives of their children. It is the father’s example that gets to the children. Just as Jesus is the head of the Church, Dad is the head of the family—the domestic church. That does not mean he should be bossing around his wife and children. He is the spiritual leader of his family. He is not the spiritual director, but the spiritual leader who leads his family by prayer and faith. If every family is a domestic church and every church has a priest, the father is the priest of the domestic church. He is a man of prayer and faith who leads by example. He listens to the Holy Spirit. He is obedient to the will of God. Five sons asked their father, “Who is most obedient?” Father replied, “The most obedient is the one who doesn’t ever talk back to Mother.” Quickly, one of his five sons replied, “Okay, Dad, *you* are the most obedient then.”

St. Theresa of Lisieux always remembered the faith and example of her dad. She used to ask her first-grade classmates an innocent question: “Have you ever seen a saint praying?” She would add: “If you haven’t, come to my house in the evening. You will see my dad on his knees in his room with his out-stretched arms, praying for us, his children, every day.”

Parenting is not easy. But always take time to pray. The Devil is after the hearts of the fathers. Once he has drawn the hearts of the fathers away from what is true and holy, he knows that the rest is easy. God has given you a unique role as priests of your families. Remember to pray for your spouse and children every day. Let us pray that all the fathers may always listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and demonstrate deep faith in all that they do and say.