



Prayer

Loving Father, You have given us the virtue of faith to follow Your Son. May we place our faith in Him alone and find, at the end of our journey on earth, a place with You in heaven. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Ezekiel 2:2-5

How often do we hear people say, “I don’t see God in my life; I don’t hear God in my prayers; I don’t feel the presence of God?”

When we rely only on our five senses, we lack faith. We need to let our inner faith recognize God in our midst. If we do not tap into the Virtue of Faith, we begin to rebel. We have our melt downs.

The Prophet Ezekiel understood this when he was sent to the Israelites. He understood that they were “hard of face and obstinate of heart,” because they failed to recognize that he was a prophet of God sent to them.

The Israelites and all of humanity have been rebellious toward God since the beginning of time. We have always cried out to God to be with us. Yet, as we cry, we don’t open our eyes of faith to see that God has always been in our lives.

Even the most faithful among us can have moments of doubt. Yet, unless we practice our faith, we can find ourselves “hard of face and obstinate of heart.”

Question

How do you practice your faith in order to avoid having a rebellious heart?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 2 Cor 12:7-10

READINGS

EZEKIEL 2:2-5
PSALM 123:1-2, 2, 3-4
2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10
MARK 6:1-6

Saint Paul was granted the unique privilege of having a revelation of God. Recall his conversion on his way to Damascus. He and his companions heard the voice of Jesus, using their own sense of hearing. (Acts 9)

Paul recognized that all of his own disciples had not enjoyed the same revelation. Yet, they came to believe

based on his testimony and his proclamation of the Good News. In essence, his own students had to rely strictly on faith and not with their senses.

Paul acknowledges that the revelation of Christ at Damascus is nothing to keep him elated. Rather, he understands that the Lord’s “grace is sufficient.” Whether we see the Lord with our physical senses or by strict faith alone, “his grace is sufficient.”

It is the grace of Christ that gives us the strength to carry our cross and stay on his mission. Whether or not we see him, feel him, or hear him, we know that he is still with us.

Questions

How has the grace of Christ been sufficient for you?

Are you interested in receiving free commentaries for your own personal or group reflections during this 6 week series and throughout the year?

**Visit us at Christ in Our Neighborhood
www.christ-ion.com**

Commentary

Gospel: Mark 6:1-6

In our First Reading, Ezekiel was not recognized as a prophet of God. In the Gospel, Jesus, is not recognized either.

The people of his town know of his origins. They know his family and his relatives. Yet, they see only with their senses. Their knowledge of Jesus is derived from sense-experience.

They recognized that he had great wisdom and he was able to cure some sick, but they were astonished because they “knew” from where he came. Though they were “astonished,” Jesus was “amazed.” As we read, “He was amazed at their lack of faith.”

Over these past four weeks, we have been reflecting on the Virtue of Faith. Perhaps it is time to take an account of our own faith in Christ. Rather than relying on empirical evidence (knowledge through our senses), we need to place our faith in the Lord.

Question

How do you honor the Christ the True Prophet even when you do not feel his presence?

This Week's Task

These useful sports habits will help you to practice your faith:

Teamwork: Dedicate yourself to regular group studies or reflections using Christ In Our Neighborhood or other programs.

Get to the field early: Be proactive in your prayer life and avoid being reactive.

Find a coach: Seek a prayer partner or find a spiritual director to help you on your faith journey.

Prayer

The group offers this prayer by Blessed Mother Teresa:

*“The fruit of prayer is faith,
the fruit of faith is love,
the fruit of love is service
and the fruit of service is peace.”*

Let us begin to change the world for the better by turning in humble prayer to God, the Creator of all that exists. Let us be renewed in faith.

The prayer continues with Psalm 123

Psalm

Response: Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

To you I lift up my eyes
who are enthroned in heaven —
As the eyes of servants
are on the hands of their masters.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

As the eyes of a maid
are on the hands of her mistress,
So are our eyes on the LORD, our God,
till he have pity on us.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

Have pity on us, O LORD, have pity on us,
for we are more than sated with contempt;
our souls are more than sated
with the mockery of the arrogant,
with the contempt of the proud.

R. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

Conclude with an Our Father