

June 25, 2017 – 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A
Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning and how are you? Blessed!

We are most blessed especially when we focus on the second reading today. When Paul talks about what Adam did for us and what Jesus did for us. Now for whatever reason Catholic's focus way too much on what Adam did for us. He brought us into sin, where Original Sin came from, and we're all corrupt and we're no good, no good, no good, and we love to focus on that, too often. But Paul says what Adam did was good and it brought a lot of us down. But what Jesus did, this is called, what is it? Grace. And Grace far surpasses what Adam did. So for whatever reason we always focus on the sin of Adam instead of the Grace of Jesus.

You know, when I tweeted this morning I focused on the reality of Amazing Grace, that this is what we believe in. That we don't focus only on sin because if we don't have sin, who needs grace? So of course there is sin, of course there is punishment for sin and of course sin will separate us from God forever. But that's where Grace comes in. The grace for God that pays for our sins, that loves us and brings us into an eternal relationship with Him, we focus on Grace. We focus on God is good and He does everything in His power to save us. We gotta surrender to Him completely and not try to work this through in ourselves by trying to be good people. But by surrendering our complete lives to Him, holding nothing back. Yet, still in amidst of all these things we realize in the gospel and in the Old Testament, the struggle. Here's Jeremiah the Prophet and Jeremiah, they want Him dead right? And so what did He say? "The Lord is with me?" The Lord is with me, as a mighty champion. That he could focus on all the trials of his life, the people that didn't like him, the people who wanted him dead. He could say the Lord is with me. That gave him strength.

Then in the gospel we hear Jesus talk about you don't have to be afraid of anything. God has counted every hair on your head. Now for some of you that was an easy thing for God, because you don't have any. But the rest of us have all the hairs on our head. The reality is God has counted all the hairs on your head, that's how intimate He is with you. So what I want to encourage you the first thing is you gotta focus on God in His goodness. That God is good. That God wants you to be saved, that He wants you to be saved. That God loves you and has done everything in His power to save you. But then it's not enough to sit there and to know that reality up in the sky, in the air, or in my mind, I gotta know that I am never alone. I'm never alone. And that's why when Jeremiah says the Lord is with me that is a great example for what we can do in the midst of our struggles.

But I would go beyond saying the Lord is with me. As if it was a third person to count. I would encourage you to say you Lord Jesus are with me. That no matter what you're going through Jesus you are with me. That when life gets dark, Jesus you are with me. When you are struggling with your sin, Jesus you are with me. What that does is that it focuses not on yourself, and your problems, or the people around you. You're focusing on Jesus. Then you remember that

His Grace is stronger than your tribulation. His grace is stronger than your sin. His grace is stronger than the people who don't like you. His grace is going to get you through anything.

So today Jesus gives us a remedy for fear. It's Himself. Jesus, you are with me. Jesus, you are with me. That'll get you through anything. May each of you know His love, today and forever, Amen.