

06/25/2023. 12th Sunday O T Year A

Jer.20:10-13; Rom.5:12-15; Matt.10:26-33

Prophet Jeremiah tells us to expel from our mind all fear and worry because God is with us and he will protect us from all evil.

I would like to share with you five types of fears, as mentioned by someone. First is fear of rejection. If we will not do this or that, they might reject us and we will be in the limelight.

Second is fear of being hurt again. We may get hurt because we are overlooked, unappreciated or misunderstood. It may even compel us to close ourselves from any involvement for fear of being hurt again. I experienced this myself. What I did and said was being misunderstood. I came to a point that I have to be indifferent. In the beginning, this experience depressed me a lot. But I realized at the end that none of these should diminish my spirit to continue doing good. My heart should be big enough to allow such hurts to keep me from reaching out to people who may be worse off and hurting more than I am.

Third is fear of anticipation of what might happen. The most prevalent statement by us is: "What if..." "I will do this or not do that, what will happen to me?" Fourth is fear to take responsibility and act on it. We want to be blessed by God and yet we are afraid of the demands that the blessing will ask us for from all of us. We want to go and have reconciled with our enemy and yet we hesitate to do so.

The reading from the Gospel of Matthew Jesus repeatedly asks the twelve disciples not to be afraid. As disciples, we stand with Jesus entrusting ourselves to him. Jesus reassures us of our value in God's eyes and promises us that he will protect us as he does with the birds of the air and entire creation.

A mother and her little four-year-old daughter were preparing to retire for the night. The child was afraid of the dark, and the mother, along with the

child, felt fearful also. When the light was off, the child caught a glimpse of the moon outside the window. "Mother," she asked, "is the moon God's light?" "Yes," said the mother. "God's light is always shining." The next question was, "Will God blow out His light and go to sleep?" And the mother replied, "No, my child. God never goes to sleep." Then out of simplicity of a child's faith she said that which gave reassurance to the fearful mother: "Well, so long as God is awake, I am not afraid."

Jesus delicately tells his disciples not to be worried of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. The history of the church is filled with examples where people have stood for Jesus and sacrificed their lives.

Jesus therefore provides the remedy to overcome worry and distress. Having faith in his heavenly Father and sharing the cause of his worry in prayer with the Father. We see a transformation in Jesus during his prayer. He began praying, "My soul is sorrowful even to death" but when he concluded he prayed, "Your will be done!" That is what happens to us when we have faith in God and bring our anxieties to God in prayer.

We should be transformed during prayer and receive strength from God to face what lies ahead. So, when there are problems, have faith and pray!

Amen.