

June 25, 2023

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 20:10-13

Rom 5:12-15

Mt 10:26-33

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW: When I was in middle school, I came upon a group of students who had singled out another student, accusing her of some pretty rotten things. The Lord must have helped me to be brave that day because I decided to step in and defend her. Thankfully, calling them out on their cruelty was enough to fend them off. Thank God for his presence and aid in that moment! In the first reading today, Jeremiah tells of his experience of being betrayed and accused: “All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine. ‘Perhaps he will be trapped [they say]; then we can prevail, and take our vengeance on him.’” But Jeremiah does not lose heart, saying also, “the Lord is with me, like a mighty champion.” And Jesus’ words in the Gospel echo the resolve of Jeremiah when he says: “Fear no one ... What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light ... And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.” It seems pretty clear, then, that our job is to bring the Good News of Jesus into the world whenever we can and let his light shine forth by our words and actions. We are commissioned to be warriors for Christ who should not fear injury but rather call upon him in our need and trust in his goodness and mercy to render aid.

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: Stepping into a conflict or situation can be difficult. But we are not meant to do it alone. Yes, we are called to proclaim the Word of God at every opportunity – to let “zeal” for our Father’s house consume us, as we heard in the psalm. And the task at hand may seem a daunting one – until we focus on the second part of the Gospel and soak in the depth of the love Jesus has for each of his children. Matthew writes: “Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted.” We are not alone as we do the work of the Father; rather, we are known and loved by him and strengthened by the Advocate, the Holy Spirit. We can feel emboldened by this as we pursue the everlasting gift of heaven.

ENGAGE: This world often tells us to do what makes us happy. Let’s challenge ourselves to, instead, do what makes us *holy*, as we keep our eyes fixed on the path to eternity.