

July 15-16, 2017

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 55:10-11

Romans 8:18-23

Matthew 12:1-23

For the sake of clarity and truthfulness, PERHAPS the Bible should have this imprimatur printed on the cover (and Masses and homilies should begin with this disclaimer...): ***'A relationship with Jesus does not a stress-free life insure. A relationship with Jesus is not a guarantee against auto accidents, disease or work related struggles. Having Jesus entwined within your life does not preserve you from the periodic darkness' that come with human life.*** This sort of HONESTY might preserve a whole bunch of people from feeling set-up for disappointment when their FAITH does not DO what they perhaps thought it was supposed to do. All relationships are difficult and require work and renewal. A relationship with Father-Son-Holy Spirit likewise requires continual vigilance to not allow it to become mundane or so 'spiritualized/ritualized' that it ceases being a source of genuine strength and hope. This weekend's Gospel speaks vividly about the assorted struggles for FAITH to be sown and GROW in a person's heart. Disappointment, disillusionment, prior commitments to dark pursuits, inability to make longtime commitments, misunderstanding the intent and purpose of a God-relationship, all these can be easily seen within many of the people we interact with in our daily lives. What have been the struggles for YOU to continually believe in a merciful God? What have been YOUR struggles to continually participate and live your faith within the Roman Catholic Church? What have been the hardest part of your faith? What are the easiest aspects? Does your faith offer you comfort and solace? How about the CHURCH? Has the CHURCH offered comfort, solace and mercy? In living your faith, how do you try to present/demonstrate it to other people so they may not have false expectations of what a Jesus-centered life is all about?

Thank you for sharing this weekend with our Santa Clara Community. My thanks to Fr. Seamus, Fr. Moneypenny, Fr. Horan and Bishop Freyer for covering for me while I am away with our Married Couples Retreat...sweltering in the desert with Jesus. Next weekend we will have a special **Missionary Appeal at all our Masses as Fr. Rudy Alumam** will be speaking on behalf of the Diocese of Navrongo-Bolgatanga, Ghana. The diocese of Navrongo-Bolgatanga, which began in 1906, is one of the 20 dioceses in Ghana, and is located at the extreme north of the country, covering 11,995 square miles. The Diocesan population is currently estimated at 3 million at an annual growth rate of 3%, with 45% being below 14 years old, and 52.4% being female. The population in the Diocese which is predominantly rural is scattered among several small localities with some having very high population densities. The Diocese has 19 parishes with each parish having an average of 15 mission churches. Besides evangelizing through the sacraments, the church in this part of the country is very much involved in the socio-economic development of the people by way of health, education and agriculture. Also, please note that our St. Vincent de Paul Society is preparing to distribute EMPTY backpacks that you will hopefully return, filled with assorted school supplies for the students of our Sister Parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary and a few other designated schools. The Bulletin has more info, please take one on your way home...and please say a prayer for the Married Couples on Retreat this weekend. As your summer progresses, please remember that you are loved. FKB