

19th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (C) (2019)

A) TRUSTING THE SUPERVISOR

- A few years ago I went walking with a friend in the Brecon Beacons
- one walk took us to a series of waterfalls
- groups of young people wearing wetsuits, waterproofs and helmets, with adults supervising and leading
- youngsters were encouraged to do hair-raising things at the waterfalls: jumping in from a high rock, or standing with their backs to the water and falling backwards while staying straight as a tree-trunk
- some of them found it quite scary, but managed to do so when they felt they could trust the leaders
- all of today's readings are about trusting somebody, and the somebody in this case is God himself.

B) FIRST READING

- First Reading from the Book of Wisdom was intended to encourage the Jews living in exile not long before the coming of Christ.
- They are reminded of the great saving act which God carried out for his chosen people, centuries before, when he delivered them out of slavery in Egypt
- God was faithful to his promises then, and he will continue to be faithful now.
- The Jews were encouraged by being reminded of that event.
- In the same way, it is good for us to reflect on our own personal lives, and to try to see those events, those situations, those apparent coincidences when God seemed very close, when we felt his presence or his special intervention.
- Thinking of events like that can raise our spirits, when we are feeling discouraged or depressed.

C) SECOND READING

- The Second Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews is list of the heroes of faith.
- Abraham obeyed God's call to set out for an unknown land, because he trusted.
- He obeyed God's call to sacrifice his only son Isaac because he trusted.
- Sarah also trusted, even though she knew that what God had in mind for her was humanly impossible.
- In these cases too, these people trusted because God had made them a promise, and God is faithful.
- God has made promises to us as well.
- He has promised us his love, his mercy, his gifts, all of them enshrined in the person of Jesus Christ, all of them guaranteed to us if only we would accept them.
- Above all, he has promised us unending life and happiness in union with him.

D) GOSPEL

- The Gospel Reading opens with an invitation to trust in the promises of God.
- THERE IS NO NEED TO BE AFRAID, LITTLE FLOCK, FOR IT HAS PLEASED YOUR FATHER TO GIVE YOU THE KINGDOM.
- Trust in him and he will take care of you.
- So trusting in God is at the very heart of the Christian faith.
- It means building our security solely on God's faithfulness
- He is faithful; utterly and unchangingly faithful. He will never let me down.
- In the eyes of God, I am unique, chosen from eternity, called by name, loved with a love that is infinite.
- I can trust him completely and absolutely.
- There may be times when he seems distant and silent.
- I may experience desolation.
- But I know that I am in good hands.
- St Thomas More, imprisoned in the Tower of London, wrote to his daughter Meg: Nothing can come but that which God wills. And I make myself very sure that whatever that be, seem it never so bad in sight, it shall in deed be best.

E) JESUS

- Our greatest model for trust is Jesus himself, who trusted in his Father's love even in the desolation and abandonment of the Cross.
- He died trusting, and so his moment of death became his moment of victory, and God raised him high.
- Jesus repeatedly tells us in the Gospels to trust in God, that there is no need to be afraid.
- When storms rage around you, when you ponder your future, when you feel you are sinking,
- trust in the one who loves you with unutterable tenderness, and who has your ultimate good at heart.

O my God, I hope in You, (I trust in You) for grace and for glory, because of Your promises, Your mercy, and Your power. Amen.

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