Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time — August 13, 2023

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

Sometimes in trying to understand the Bible, we settle for too little. Often, for example this weekend's gospel reading, is taken to mean only that when the troubles of life assail us, we can prevail over these storms simply by having faith. After all, does not Jesus say as Simon Peter sinks in the sea, "Oh you of little faith."

There is a grain of truth in such an understanding; yet to leave it there is to settle for too little. The point of this weekend's gospel reading, as also of the Old Testament selection, is that God is ruler of creation and therefore is to be adored and served. The maker of heaven and earth still governs all that has been made, this is the basis for our worship and the foundation of our hope.

Often, we do suffer from little faith. But the matter is not remedied by sitting ourselves down and resolving to have more faith. Usually that is a futile enterprise designed only to make matters worse. We focus more and more upon ourselves and less and less upon God, as did St. Peter when he approached Jesus on the sea.

Attentiveness to divine strength and goodness is the remedy for lack of faith. The gospel calls us to look forward, not inward, and thus to behold the glory of God, who is our help.

To know the closeness of God in Jesus is a central insight of the Christian faith. But if we overemphasize that affinity of Jesus to us as human beings, we are in danger of losing something important: the crucial confidence that this one who is near to us is nevertheless vastly different from us. The One we address as the Christ is not merely a human companion with us on our journey of faith, but is the source and sustenance of our faith.

Is our understanding of the One we call Christ so rich, so important to us in our daily lives, that we are in agony because other people think too little of Jesus? Or are we like the disciples during the storm who need our faith in Christ expanded and intensified?

Perhaps there is an important question for each of us to ponder; with whom do we more closely identify in this weekend's New Testament readings? Are we disciples who cry out in fear for our own life because our understanding of Jesus is too small? Or are we apostles who cry out in agony at the impoverished faith of others? Like the apostles, would we give up our own fellowship with God if only that could enable others to have the joy of that fellowship in their lives?

These are hard questions; and if we are not satisfied with our answers, that is good. For it is evidence that we see our need to grow in faith. But again, let it be emphasized that growth comes not by looking inward and lamenting our lack of faith. Growth comes by concentrating on the goodness, mercy and power of God.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**August 15**	**11:00AM**
Jorge, Tomasa, Jose & Manuel†		
Wed.	**August 16**	**11:00AM**
Living Memorial		
Thur.	**August 17**	**11:00AM**
Jorgelia B. Quiapo†		Ed & Mae
Fri.	**August 18**	**11:00AM**
Filemon D. Lacsina Sr. †		Lacsina Family
Sat.	**August 19**	**4:30PM**
C. Essex & Janice *(anniversary)*		Mom & Dad
Sun.	**August 20**	**9:00AM**
NO MASS		
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
Miguel & Rita Gomez†		Your Children

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