

October 20-21, 2007

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Exodus 17:8-13

Second Timothy 3:14-4:2

Luke 18:1-8

There is a difference between persistence and obsession. For example, persistence is a mother getting up every morning, fixing breakfast, getting the kids dressed for school and out the door with either their lunches or lunch-money...and doing it every day of the week during the academic year, rain or shine. Obsession is making two or three breakfast AND lunch options, washing the car before driving the kids in it, ironing their clothes after they go to bed and flossing their teeth for them while they sleep. Persistence is run of the mill, day-in/day-out commitment, obsession smacks of magic and superstition (if one Sign of the Cross is good, let's make three or four over ourselves!). Our First Reading from Exodus presents an image from the Old Testament that many of us find bothersome, God helping Joshua 'mow down' the enemy army. Not exactly the tasteful language we usually apply to God. Yet, the message contained within this unsavory passage is that great things can happen when we are in continual relationship with God....and do our part (in this case, Moses was asked to keep his arms raised...that's it...just keep his arms up, even if it meant having others help.) In the Gospel of Luke we hear of persistence in maintaining a 'conversation' with God...but remember, a conversation is usually a private affair, thus, obsessive external behavior is to be avoided. Persistence is humble acceptance of life's limits, obsession is prideful thinking that we can exert power over every situation. Persistence is simply doing our best in ordinary ways, day in and day out....and being careful to not slip into obsessive behavior that would make our relationship with God resemble a freak show. Persistence is the wisdom to know one's limits....obsession is the compulsion to be a part of everything. Obsession is ultimately selfish, persistence is simply strength of character. In closing, the Gospel quotes Jesus as wondering if 'faith will be found on earth?' Persistence allows us freedom to understand that faith is not something we 'possess' and then keep on a shelf, a one-time purchase sort of thing. Faith is persistent development of a truthful relationship, both with ourselves and with God, it is not determined by single moments or single actions. As intentional Catholic-Christians endeavoring to be disciples of Jesus Christ...persistence is key...not obtaining something, but entering into something. Faith is not an object to be admired, it is the all-encompassing relationship (conversation) into which Jesus calls us.

Thank you for sharing this Autumn weekend with our Corpus Christi family. Please accept a Bulletin on your way home, it contains information on next Sunday's Autumn Mass and Hoe-Down at Oak Glen, the Masses for All Saints/All Souls Days and much, much more. As always, with persistence, remember, you are loved. FKB