

22nd Sunday Ordinary Time 8-30-20 Homily Deacon Todd

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Romans 12:1-2

Matthew 16 21-27

Well, Peter didn't get to enjoy his designation as the Rock on which Christ would build His church for very long! One minute Jesus is praising Peter for acknowledging Him as the Messiah and the next, Jesus is calling him Satan and telling him to get out of his sight.

Peter wasn't evil; that is not what Jesus meant by calling him Satan, which in Hebrew means "the opposer",-- the one opposed to faith and to God's will. The will of God and Jesus' only purpose of coming to earth, was to die, and be resurrected. God came to earth in human form, he taught us the way it should be;-- showed us absolutely that God is real, that He is God, and He is here to save us and claim us, as it was planned from the beginning.

Satan did not and could not stop God's plan. Jesus died and was resurrected. We have died and are resurrected. The most important thing Jesus did, was giving us our baptism into His plan. Baptism is and remains the most gracious gift God has bestowed on the world. It is the summary of it all. One of the few direct commandments from Jesus, to His apostles and the church, is to 'go out and teach all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That is because Baptism is our sharing in the death, and resurrection of Jesus; of our being saved, claimed by God, and becoming truly His children. We tap into God's plan and desire, and now can become like Him.

I really cannot say this enough! This is why the Church has us renew our Baptismal vows so many times during the year, and regularly reminds us to live out our Baptism. We have become Christ, we are like Jesus, we are the sons and daughters to Almighty God. And He expects us to live daily and remember always, that we are also anointed as priest, prophet, and king while we are on this Earth; ---so get behind me Satan, if you

cannot embrace that sacrifice as Christ our Lord did. Satan tried thru Peter then, and He tries now daily, to stop us from joining in that sacrifice of ourselves with Christ. Satan wants us to play it safe....and don't let harm, pains, and struggle enter our lives---- and certainly don't give up your life for others!!

Indeed, we face many "Satans" in our lives in this culture: people or things that oppose our faith by promising pleasure or comfort or power or safety if we only have this or do that. These Satans try to dupe us into thinking that we can avoid the sacrifice that comes with loving and living our Baptism. -- We as priest, are to help others understand who God is and who we are in relation to God. We as prophets are to learn and speak God's truth, especially to the lost, the weak, and poor, even when it is not what people want to hear. Finally, we as kings, are to care for those who are in need, especially those who have no one else to help them. Don't let Satan dupe us, into avoiding being the priest, prophet, and king we are called to be, like our brother Jesus Christ.

Speaking of duping, let's talk about Jeremiah. As a Catholic, as a Christian, as a Baptized family member of God, we will have so much in common with Jeremiah. In the first reading, Jeremiah cries out to God that he was duped by God. God promised Jeremiah that he would have God with him when he proclaimed God's truth even though the king, and the other prophets and the priests and the people of Jerusalem did not want to hear that. Jeremiah was scorned, jailed, thrown in a dry well to die, and finally dragged off in exile to Egypt when Jerusalem was destroyed.

Jeremiah duped himself into thinking that if God was with him, nothing bad would happen to him. Jesus makes sure his disciples do not dupe themselves the same way. Jesus repeatedly has told us the same in scripture. Following Jesus, being the Body of Christ here and now, is what we must do to bring salvation to the world, but that will be a cross, not a cushy desk job. If we are doing it right and following our Lord Jesus, it will feel like we are carrying a cross when we live our baptism. If we are the priests, prophets, and kings we are anointed to be, then the road we travel will be hard. We must choose to be the hands, feet, heart, love and soul of Christ, because we are the fruits His resurrection; so show it!!

Jesus has told us that we must take up our cross each day, not as a sign of suffering but rather a sign of trusting in God. It reminds us that God will be with us, even in the worst pain and suffering, not to take away that pain and suffering, but to transform it into salvation for the world. Finally, as Paul warns us, let us not be duped into thinking like our culture. Instead, let us be transformed by the renewal of our mind, that we may know and live the will of God, that which is all good, perfect, and pleasing to Him.