

Holy Family Sunday
December 27, 2020
“Our Great Adventure”

Gen 15:1-6; 21:1-3
Heb 11:8...19
Lk 2:22-40

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

When we think about it, probably the greatest adventure that most people will ever have is that of marriage and family life. It is an adventure because of so much of the unknown. Learning to live with and better understand a spouse is a life-long dynamic. No person is static in their development. And because we all grow and change, there are always new challenges and opportunities that any relationship will bring.

Another aspect of this great adventure is the rearing of children. Children are each unique and special creations. They will be like their parents in some ways, and unlike them in others. Furthermore, parents can have hopes and dreams for their children – yet, each child must follow his or her own adventure as it unfolds before them.

For any marriage to endure and become all that it should be, the partners must have faith and trust. They must have faith and trust in each other – and even more importantly, faith and trust in God. God must be an integral component of any marital relationship. Without God, the spouses will never survive all the surprises, challenges, and hardships that life necessarily brings.

The marriage of Abraham and Sarah had this necessary component. Throughout their lives, they were dedicated to God’s call and plan. They made mistakes. Sometimes they did things their own way. But they were always open to correction and change. Moreover, they were always faithful to God in their deepest selves.

It was their mutual adventure and their faith and trust in God that brought forth the Chosen People. And the Chosen People were created to prepare for the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ – who would bring salvation to the world.

In the Gospel of Luke, Mary and Joseph were part of the greatest adventure of all. For in their union and household would be the nurturing environment for Jesus, the incarnate Word of God.

In the Gospel selection for today, we see the Holy Family of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in the Temple. They were there to make the required offering of Mary's firstborn to God. It was on that occasion that they met Simeon and Anna who, themselves, were people of great faith and trust. Moreover, they were promised by God to see the one who would be the savior of the world – Of the world, because no one would be beyond the scope of that salvation, including the Gentiles as well as the Chosen People!

However, both Jew and Gentile would have to accept the truth of all that the savior would reveal. That acceptance would always require faith and trust – Because truth always has enemies. These enemies would continually try to deny, distort, and confuse the truth that the savior would reveal.

To counter this, every believer, like Mary, must use the sword of discernment to separate the truth of God, from the deception and lies of satan. This is always a daunting task. However, it can be done with faith and trust that builds upon a personal relationship with God and with Jesus, himself.

The way of truth is always the most simple way. Nevertheless, this is not to say that it is an easy way. We will often experience hardship when we choose the truth and the way it leads. But this choice – and God's grace – will always help us on the adventure that is our own life!

Finally, St. Paul reminds us of the faith and trust of Abraham and Sarah in their own great adventure. Called by God, they left family and homeland. They journeyed far – and to a new land. After being childless, they would finally have a child, a son, Isaac, in their very old age. And then, God asked for that son in sacrifice. When all seemed lost, God restored the boy to his parents – and from Isaac would come the people and the salvation that God had promised.

Brothers and Sisters, we are all on a great adventure. Most of us are in a shared adventure with another – while a few are not. What is paramount for everyone is that we develop a relationship with God – a relationship that will be sustained by faith and trust. This relationship will deliver us from the mistakes we have made when we chose our own way instead of God's way. Moreover, it will restore us to whatever will be best for the future!

So let us pray, today, that God, with His grace, will always be part of our adventure as it unfolds before us!

Amen.

December 27, 2020

Msgr. Russell G. Terra