

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - C -2019  
2 Maccabees 7.1-2,9-14//2 Thess.2.16-3.5//Luke 20.27-38

→there once was a set of twins in the womb of their mother

→one was a girl; the other was a boy.

→months passed and as they developed and grew in the womb...they would sing to each other: "isn't it great to be alive!" and together they explored their mother's womb.

→when they found their mother's life cord, they shouted for joy: how great [they thought] is our mother's love, that she shares her life with us

→however, as time moved on the twins changed drastically...and soon they began to feel that their time in the womb was coming to an end....

...."what does this mean for us?" asked the boy, "I don't want to leave here...I want to stay forever"

→the girl said..."we have no choice....but maybe...just maybe....there is **life** after **birth**"

→ the boy said "how can that be.... we are going shed our mother's cord and leave this comfortable place.....how can life be possible without all this?"

→And besides, there's evidence...that others were here before us, and none of them came back to tell us there is **life** after **BIRTH**.....nope this is the end."

→and the boy fell into despair, "there is no **life** after **birth**" he kept saying and the last days were filled with fear and anxiety

→finally, the moment of birth arrived....the twins left the womb and were born and when they opened their eyes for the first time....they cried out for joy

→because what they saw.....exceeded their wildest dreams!

PAUSE

→now that story, is very similar to the one we just heard in today's gospel  
...because just like the twins who wondered about **life** after **BIRTH** and what it would be like

→we often wonder about life after DEATH and what that is going to be like

→in today's gospel we hear about the Sadducee's, --who didn't believe in life after death,-- approaching Jesus with an interesting problem, a riddle of sorts about---the whole idea of the resurrection and the afterlife

→it's a question, a problem, a riddle – that I am sure many of us, at some time or another, have also pondered and thought about in our own moments of quiet and prayer

→ “what happens after we die”...is something all of us have thought about at some time or another....

→and as we see, even at the time of Jesus....opinions and beliefs about life after death were part of people's conversations

PAUSE

→the Sadducees clung to ancient traditions and beliefs...they rejected anything that seemed new and different

→and one of the NEW things they rejected .... and had no use for..... was this business about life after death

→the idea or concept of resurrection....life after death....was an idea that the Sadducees, did not believe in

→however, even more important is that the Sadducees also rejected Jesus and all that he taught and stood for

→like the Pharisees, they saw Jesus as a threat and they simply wanted to get rid of him...he was causing too many problems for them among the people

→so... they confront Jesus with this clever argument about seven brothers and the one woman to show the absurdity of HIS teaching about life after death and the resurrection

and yet, J. manages to give them an answer that comes as a complete SURPRISE to the Sadducees and perhaps as a surprise to you and me.

---his answer is basically this....GOD is not a GOD of the dead but a GOD of the LIVING

→God is the source of life, and because we share in this life.....ALL OF US ARE ALIVE IN GOD

PAUSE

→Jesus really doesn't spend time talking about what heaven or the afterlife is going to be about, or what's going to happen

----instead he points out....that the presence of GOD here and now is what matters.....GOD is a GOD of the living.....and living life is what needs to be our concern

→it is a somewhat surprising answer, or at least one that was not expected

→yet...when you think about it, surprises were the hallmark of Jesus' teachings....he was full of surprises, one right after another

→people expected the Messiah to be a royal figure...surprise! ....he came into the world in a stable

→people believed, as many still do today....an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, yet surprise!  
Jesus. said something about turning the other cheek

→many people are quick to condemn others, yet surprise! Jesus got them to put down their stones

→and finally, many thought Jesus was dead forever when he died on the cross, but SURPRISE! when they went to the tomb....it was empty.

→and today, J. is telling you and me, is that the Kingdom of God, the resurrection will also be a surprise

→however more importantly, what I believe Jesus is telling us today is to be concerned about our life here and now...and how our faith and taking care of one another might be our priority

PAUSE

→[you know]....not one of us knows what the afterlife, or the resurrection, or what heaven is going to be like

none of us knows what it is going to feel like, or what it's going to taste like or smell like

→we all have is our images and dreams...it may be a garden or a feast....it may be a place of joy and singing.....but in reality that's all they are....images and ideas, hopes and dreams

→what we do know, however, is what our faith and lives and existence is like here and now...and what needs our attention in order to make all this much better

→the little boy didn't want to leave his mother's womb yet when he arrived into the world he was pleasantly surprised

→so too, heaven is going to be just as pleasant and just as big of a surprise as well

→ so perhaps maybe the message for us today is simple...instead of putting so much energy towards wondering what heaven is going to be like....why not just wait for the surprise

.....and in the meantime, maybe we need to work on making the most of the time we got here  
and now

→to make this world and this life as best as it can be.....

→and to remember...just as there is life after birth....there is also life after death