

19TH SUNDAY ORD. (C) **WAIT FOR THE LORD'S COMING IN FAITH**

Every society or people of nations or tribes has its own history. History guides people to look forward to the future with hope. In the first reading the Israelites looked back at their history, and discovered that God has always been faithful to His promises. They recalled the oaths God swore to their fathers and how they were fulfilled. He delivered them from slavery, and punished their enemies.

Abraham (the father of the Israelites) was promised descendants even though he had no child, but he believed and his descendants became numerous like the stars. He did not live to see them but he had faith in whatever he was told. The second reading explains what faith is: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen". Abraham was convinced of whatever God promised so he was ready to go where he was told to go, and ready to sacrifice his only son, even though he did not know what was going to happen to him.

Today, we are reminded of what Jesus told His disciples: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms; provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy". This is similar to the promise made to Abraham. The Lord has promised to come again in glory at a time no one knows. We are to move from where we are to a place shown by God. We are to leave our comfort zone to live out our faith in the midst of trials and secularism. Again we are to sacrifice our 'Isaacs' by selling what we have and give alms. To be able to do that we need strong faith, that is, we have to be convinced of what the Lord told His disciples, and He is telling us today. We have to be convinced that the reward is greater than the sacrifice.

There are many challenges we face every day because of our faith, but Jesus assures us: "Do not be afraid any longer...for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom". The faithful servant who waits patiently in faith will be served by the Master Himself, instead of the servant serving Him. What happened at the last supper should remind us of this privilege and live a righteous life as we wait for the coming of the Lord. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, doing the work of a slave; (Jn.13:3-10).

We too will have our share of that service if we wait in faith.

It is important to remember that each and every one has something to account for due to our profession of faith in God. We have been taught what is good and what is bad. Much has been given to us so we cannot not be Christians just by name. The answer to Peter's question should be reflected upon seriously: "That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly". Will I be beaten? If yes, will it be severely? Will you be beaten? If yes, will it be severely? The answer depends on who I am and what God has entrusted to me, and how I am faithful or otherwise to my call. The same thing applies to you.

Do I know the master's will? Am I learning from Abraham and the saints who have gone before me? Am I ready to persevere in the trials I face every day as they did? "With so many witnesses in a great cloud all around us, we too, then, should throw off everything that weighs us down and the sin that clings so closely, and with perseverance keep running in the race which lies ahead of us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection," (Heb.12:1-2a).