

20TH SUNDAY ORD. (C)

LET US PERSEVERE IN RUNNING THE RACE THAT LIES BEFORE US

August 13/14, 2022

Looking through the scriptures, followers of God have not found life easy and smooth. That explains why St. Paul described life as war and running a race. Watching the Olympic games and other sporting activities, one may ask how the gymnasts, swimmers, divers and other athletes can perform the way they do. It is obvious that it is due to hard work and perseverance. They spend a lot of time training and disciplining themselves.

But St. Paul tells us that their wreaths will wither. He told the Corinthians: "Surely, you know that many runners take part in a race but only one of them wins the prize. Run then, in such a way as to win the prize. Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever" (1Cor.9:24-26). The prize for the Christian never withers. That is the difference between the two.

There is no doubt that it is not easy to be steadfast in our faith. But today we are told that there are many witnesses surrounding us to encourage us to persevere. Jeremiah had to suffer in the hands of his own people because he delivered God's message to them about their evil behaviors, but they were not happy with him. They wanted to eliminate him so that they could live the way they wanted. Other prophets like Elijah and Amos suffered in the hands of the people. Similar things happened to the apostles and many Christians at their time and after. Some were tortured, slain, stoned and crucified.

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20TH SUNDAY ORD. (C)

LET US PERSEVERE IN RUNNING THE RACE THAT LIES BEFORE US

August 13/14, 2022

Looking through the scriptures, followers of God have not found life easy and smooth. That explains why St. Paul described life as war and running a race. Watching the Olympic games and other sporting activities, one may ask how the gymnasts, swimmers, divers and other athletes can perform the way they do. It is obvious that it is due to hard work and perseverance. They spend a lot of time training and disciplining themselves.

But St. Paul tells us that their wreaths will wither. He told the Corinthians: "Surely, you know that many runners take part in a race but only one of them wins the prize. Run then, in such a way as to win the prize. Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever" (1Cor.9:24-26). The prize for the Christian never withers. That is the difference between the two.

There is no doubt that it is not easy to be steadfast in our faith. But today we are told that there are many witnesses surrounding us to encourage us to persevere. Jeremiah had to suffer in the hands of his own people because he delivered God's message to them about their evil behaviors, but they were not happy with him. They wanted to eliminate him so that they could live the way they wanted. Other prophets like Elijah and Amos suffered in the hands of the people. Similar things happened to the apostles and many Christians at their time and after. Some were tortured, slain, stoned and crucified.

Jesus foretold what He was to endure. He talked about His baptism which was about His suffering and death. Even though He is the Prince of peace, His words would create division. People will be rejected by their own relatives because they follow Him. So, the challenge of my faith and your faith can come from our families and relatives. During sporting activities families come together to cheer their children and relatives up to victory. What about our Christian worship on Sundays? Where are the Christian families and relatives? Are they not interested in everlasting wreaths, or it is valueless?

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