

February 7, 2021

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Please God with a thankful and cheerful heart!

Job 7:1-4, 6-7

Psalm 147:1-6

1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

Mark 1:29-39

Job has suffered many months of misery, many troubled nights filled with restlessness and his life on earth had become drudgery. So many days of sickness and tragedy make him lose hope and believe that he will not see happiness again.

The psalmist has seen the Israelites return from bondage and encourages the readers to praise our good and gracious Lord. Our God sustains the lowly, heals the brokenhearted and binds their wounds; he is so mighty in power and his wisdom is without limit enabling the numbering of stars and calling of each by name. Many ancients believed divine beings were in the stars and they controlled the fate of human beings.

Paul freely preaches the Gospel and it has become an obligation to continue to do so. He does all of this so that he can have a share in the Gospel he preaches, and bring the salvation of the Gospel to as many as possible. In doing this he has become "all things to all," for example, he became weak to win the weak and when with the Jews follows all the traditions.

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law from a fever and she immediately rises to wait upon them. Many from the community who are ill or possessed are brought to him and he cures all of them. Demons are driven out but not allowed to speak. Early the next morning he goes to a deserted place to pray and the disciples follow him to other villages where preaches about the Kingdom of God so that the good news spreads.

The Father is Almighty,
The Son's healing power is unlimited,
The Spirit guides us to listen prayerfully.

Job was blameless and upright, feared God, and yet calamity after calamity befell him. The poetry of this story of sorrow and burdens is beautiful as Job tries to make sense of all this in faith. Paul is a man who earns his own living so as not to impose upon others but is constantly preaching the Gospel and his goal is to save as many people as possible. The healings and exorcisms of Jesus were not an end to themselves but in service to his preaching the good news. Pray for the confidence to remain strong in faith during difficult situations and recall Job was eventually justified.

In Mark 1:25, Jesus healed the demoniac with his powerful word; in Mark 1:31 he healed Peter's mother-in-law with a touch; in other instances he told the disciples that a particular healing could only be accomplished by prayer. Jesus is telling us that there is power in listening, power in a compassionate touch, power in patient prayer, and just as a teacher in a classroom may not know how he affects his students so we may never realize how much healing is empowered by a kind word, a compassionate touch, or heartfelt prayer.

Jesus the Healer comes to us when we become aware that we need healing, when we become conscious of our weakness and our fear and it is then we can begin to grow in union with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give. (Matt 10:8)

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