

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time - June 20, 2021

Homily by Deacon Steve Livingston

Job was a **just** man. A righteous and faithful **servant** of the Lord ... **and** ... he had been **blessed** many fold. He was wealthy. He had a large loving family. He had good health. Then ... disaster struck. He lost all his wealth and his **children** were all **killed**. And Job was left suffering from disease, covered with **boils** and **sores** all over his body. And as if all this were not bad enough ... Job has three **friends** who come to **help** him. Sadly ... **their** idea of **help** is to accuse him ... telling him that he must have committed some **horrendous** evil or these things would **not** have happened to him. And Job? How was he handling all this? Well ... I am sure you have all heard of someone referred to as having the "*patience of Job*". Oh, Job started out patient enough but his patience had run out and so ... He **complains** to God: "**Why is this happening? I have always been righteous. I have always been faithful. Why are You allowing these things to happen? Why? Why? Why?**" In today's first reading we hear part of the Lord's answer to Job. He essentially reminds Job that He, the Lord, is in control and that Job can be secure in trusting Him. Job is eventually **calmed** by God's words and ... **eventually** he is healed ... his wealth is restored and he is even given more children.

In our Psalm, sailors **acknowledge** the glorious works of God in stormy seas and praise His power to save them in the midst of great storms. They have faith that God has power over the world ... and over their lives. The psalmist tells us how the sailors trust in God even in the midst of violent seas. They count on God to quiet the raging waters and bring the ship to a safe harbor.

After a long day of teaching the crowd by the sea. Jesus finished by teaching them about faith with the parable of the mustard seed. His disciples had no idea just how **soon** that faith would be tested. It was evening and He said to them: "Let us cross to the other side." He had a **task** to do in the land of the Gerasenes. But ... that is for another homily on another Sunday.

Jesus went to sleep on a cushion in the stern of the ship as His disciples ... most probably His fishermen apostles ... set sail. A huge **storm** came up and even these very **experienced** and **hardened** sea-faring men were terrified. They wake Him and ask: "Teacher, do you not **care** that we are perishing?" He calms the sea and **rebukes** them. Remembering what He had just taught them, He asks: "Do you not **yet** have faith?"

Sometimes **our** voyage is not smooth on the sea we call life. We too experience **many** storms. We mere humans must face the storms of troubled **relationships** ... sometimes troubled **marriages** ... storms in our **workplaces** that sometimes can **even** affect our livelihoods. Students face storms in their **studies** ... in their **classrooms**. Parents face **many** storms in the raising of their children. Think of all the storms **farmers** face ... metaphorically **and** literally. Many face the storms of **financial** concerns. And ...we **all** face storms of sickness and death ... ours and loved ones.

Who has not known some or even **many** of these storms that buffet our little boat ... when all seems dark and our little boat seems be filling with water on all sides and while our God seems to be asleep ... and ... like Job or like the apostles we too, sometimes, cry out to God in prayer: "**Why**, Lord ... do

you not Care? ... **Why** do you not help? And this is a very **human** response. Even our **Lord** ... in all **His** humanity ... cried out in His agony: "My God, My God, **Why** ... have you abandoned me?"

But we ... through **all** our storms ... must **always** remember ... even though there are **many** other boats ... **we** are in the boat with Jesus ... **not** in one of those other boats ... and ... no matter **what** storms arise ... He will **always** be with us. This He has promised and this He will do.