

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

5th Sunday of Ordinary Time | For Sunday, February 7, 2021

Overcoming the Drudgery of Life

Written by Douglas Sousa

Job 7:1-4, 6-7

1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

Mark 1:29-39



Many people compare their everyday lives to running on a treadmill. They are always busy, always on the go, but never getting anywhere. Such people find themselves getting up in the morning, working, taking care of their children, putting supper together, and then going to bed only to start the cycle over again the next morning. Though coronavirus has slowed things down for most people, it has also increased the monotony of life for so many. There are times when we're not even sure what day of the week it is. All of it can cause us to question the meaning of our lives and wonder if all the activity is worth it.

In today's first reading, Job expresses some of the same sentiments. As he puts it, "Life on earth is a drudgery." Remember that Job, in a series of tragedies, lost his wife, his children, and all his possessions. In his grief, he couldn't find the strength to pick himself up from the ground. In a near state of shock, he compares his life to that of a slave or hireling who has no share in the profits of his work. These are sentiments we can very easily share, especially during these dark and cold winter days.

While Job poses the problem, Jesus provides the solution. In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus has had a very long day. The people of Capernaum, hearing that he had the power to heal and cast out demons, were bringing the sick to him while he stayed at the house of Peter's mother-in-law. When everyone had finally left, Jesus slipped away by himself to a deserted place to pray. He needed time away from the crowds and the demands of the people to spend time alone with his father.

For Jesus, prayer was a source of strength. All the power to preach the good news, to heal and to cast out demons came from the time he spent praising and adoring his Father in secret. Like all of us, Jesus needed to step aside from his busy, demanding life to take stock of his Father's presence and love.

If we are going to live lives marked by peace and joy, prayer is vitally important to us. It will bring clarity to our minds when we are confused and calm to our spirits when we are anxious. Prayer is like an incubator cultivating faith, hope, and love within our spirit.

Our lives are about much more than what we do day in and day out. Our lives are rather about who we are — children of God made in his image and likeness. Through prayer, we will see ourselves being renewed and transformed daily by God's presence and power. Our lives will be marked, not with monotony or drudgery, but with the joy and peace which come from the Holy Spirit.

Douglas Sousa

PRAYER

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER

Glorious Saint Joseph,
Model of all those who are devoted to labor,
Obtain for me the grace to work in a spirit of penance
For the expiation of my many sins;
To work conscientiously,
Putting the call of duty above my inclinations;
To work with gratitude and joy,
Considering it an honor to employ and develop,
By means of labor, the gifts received from God;
To work with order, peace, moderation, and patience,
Without ever recoiling before weariness or difficulties;
To work, above all, with purity of intention,
And with detachment from self,
Having always death before my eyes
And the account which I must render of time lost,
Of talents wasted, of good omitted,
Of vain complacency in success,
So fatal to the work of God.
All for Jesus, all for Mary, all after your example,
O Patriarch Joseph.
Such shall be my watchword in life and in death.
Amen.