

## St. Louis Catholic Church

Monday of the 4th Week of Lent

Isaiah 65:17-21

Psalm 30

John 4:43-54

I think of how overwhelmed with fear, grief, sadness and despair that the Royal Official must have felt with his son about to die. To lose a child is perhaps one of the most painful experiences in the world. He must have felt like a dark cloud was overhead and a storm was inevitable. Israel had been in exile in the scene of today's reading from Isaiah. Life was hopeless and the good days of the past would be never more. Joy, hope, laughter and inner peace had been removed from the official and the people of Israel.

Isaiah however speaks of hope in the future. A new heaven and a new earth is described as we would later hear the same message from the Book of Revelation. In that book we are told that because the lamb is victorious and on the throne that there would be a new creation. Isaiah speaks of longevity and joy that would return to the people of the covenant. Through Isaiah God calls the people to find hope in the future. Hope and renewal demand overcoming memories of the past, lingering grudges and the temptation never to forgive. They returned from exile to a new day.

No it wasn't a day of perfection because they are still subject, like us today, to the dark clouds that come our way. The Royal Official knew a terrible storm in his life. Though probably a Gentile, he came to find Jesus. Perhaps he had heard of the work especially in Cana of this man of Galilee. Christ hears the man's struggle and He sent him home with the assurance that the boy would live. On the way home the man's servants greet him and tell him that the boy was well and would live. The healing took place at the same time that Jesus said that the boy would get well.

From a distance Jesus showed His power and the power of God transformed the boy--but also the official and his household. They became believers. They experienced a new day--a new heaven and a new earth. He had put his trust in the words of Jesus. I'll bet everyday afterwards the official and his son appreciated the new heaven and new earth and new life. They could appreciate how precious family, God and the world really are to experience.

We all have dark clouds in our life. Jesus can give light and hope not just from a distance but He lives in our hearts right now. Though overwhelmed at times we can not be defeated if we trust in Him. Remember when the storm and rough seas shook the boat of the disciple, Christ came and said "Be not afraid". He calmed the sea. He still does that for us.

No. No. No. Not every dark cloud will be removed. Sometimes, frankly, it causes a storm in our life. No one is guaranteed perfect, calm and beautiful days. One of the great things, to me, about faith is an inner calm and peace that people show when they are deluged by the storm. Somehow through the grace and power of God we get through those moments and, in fact, become stronger and more faith filled. Part of the mystery of Christian faith is that the crosses we bear are redemptive suffering that leads to healing, wholeness and ultimately to new life.

Jesus is not concerned merely with our temporal well being. He wishes us to share one day in His own resurrection from the dead, so that we may enjoy his eternal happiness in heaven.

During Lent we look forward to our celebration at Easter of the resurrection from the dead. In faith we must see that Christ's victory over death as manifested in His resurrection is our victory as well. God will one day create new heavens and a new earth. Provided we keep our faith and trust in Jesus, we will enjoy that new creation through our resurrection with Jesus from the dead. With the Psalmist we can now and eternally say, "I will praise You, Lord, for You have rescued me". Enjoy today family, faith, God, your experiences. Especially the hope we have and the fact that we are eternal.

God Bless,

Msgr. John McArthur

Key Events This Week:

1. Confessions Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00-6:00 p.m.
2. Night of Reflection--Mass 6:00 p.m.--Pot Luck--Reflection--Read Mark 10
3. Stations of the Cross--Friday Evening--5:30 p.m.

Thanks to so many who brought and offered Bishop's Appeal Cards. If not please join the effort--  
Let's Keep the Light Burning.

Later in the week, I'll let you know the current money and participation accomplishment  
Goal--\$439,000  
Participation--100%