

## **“TRUST THE LORD!”**

One Saturday night, the newly ordained deacon received a last minute assignment from his pastor to deliver the homily at the first Mass on Sunday morning. He also received assurances that a substitute priest would be there to celebrate Mass and that the pastor would return in time to give the homily for the second Mass. “But how can I do this?” he asked the pastor. I have never preached to a large congregation such as yours, and I have nothing prepared!” To which the pastor replied,

**“Trust the Lord, young man. Just trust the Lord.”**

Later that night, and with the permission of the pastor, the deacon arrived at the rectory and entered into the pastor’s office. The young preacher was leafing through the pastor’s Bible, searching for inspiration. He came upon some typewritten notes that the pastor had tucked into the Bible.

After reading them over, he liked them so much that he decided to take them to the pulpit the next morning. With the pastor’s notes before him, the young man greatly pleased the congregation as he delivered a homily packed with wisdom beyond his years.

Later, as the congregation filed out of the church, many stopped to congratulate the deacon for his excellent preaching. Then the pastor himself came through the crowd. “Young man,” he said, “I arrived earlier than expected and I heard you preach the homily – the homily that I was going to deliver for the second Mass. Now what shall I do?”

**“Trust the Lord, Father,”** said the young man. **“Just trust the Lord!”**

Our first reading reflects upon how “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord.” Proverbs [3:5] informs us to “Trust with all [our] heart and do not lean on [our] own understanding.” We are to trust God for those things we need in order to live; we are to trust God for spiritual things, because He knows our spiritual poverty even better than we do; and we are to trust Him during times of affliction, because He has the power and strength to help us and He is moved to help us because of his unchanging love, grace and mercy. We are to humbly acknowledge the limitations of our wisdom and we are to quiet our hearts and trust in the Lord.

I read a recent article that described “Ruthless trust [as] an uncompromising trust that God loves [us], no matter what [we] have done...and that God is good, whether or not He intervenes in the midst of [our] pain. It is a child-like confidence that God will never abandon [us], that he will work in [our lives], even when [we] don’t feel His presence or see His hand.”

As an engineer, I can appreciate the article for presenting a formula for ruthless trust; faith + hope = trust. Faith is belief that God is. Hope is believing that God will do what he promised and trust is absolute confidence in the Father’s acceptance and unconditional love, and our total abandonment of self - to whatever He asks us to do, even when it doesn’t make sense.”

It is easy to have this child-like confidence of faith, hope and trust, when life is good, when there is money in the bank, when friends and family are supportive and when we aren’t defeated by our poor self-image.

But it is also easy to have the child-like abandonment of trust when we encounter obstacles.

Physical and emotional pain can keep us self-absorbed and unsure that God is reliable. Life’s sufferings can leave us traumatized, bruised, battered, betrayed and wondering where God’s goodness can be found.

And then there is evil, and the subsequent questions. “Why does God allow evil? Why doesn’t He intervene? Is He really there? Does He care?”

What about our self-made props of insecurity, inadequacy, inferiority and low esteem? Can we let go of these obstacles and choose to trust that God is with us and will give us what we need most? Or

will we address our insecurities by taking the easy way and by concentrating on the world's rewards, while abandoning the values of Christ?

What about our fear to surrender to our Lord's call to do his will? Are we terrified that God will take us out of our comfort zone?

And finally, perhaps the greatest obstacle is our un-belief of how much we are loved. Remember, our trust in God reflects the degree to which we know that we are loved by God.

Isaiah [61:3] speaks of God comforting His people, by giving them "...beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness..." These obstacles in our lives may make us see ashes, mourning and heaviness in spirit.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus reiterates the goodness that is awaiting us if we place our trust in God. Jesus is telling us that if we set our hearts and spend our energies to obtain the things which the world values, in order to deal with our obstacles, then we will get them – but that is all that we will ever get. But if we set our hearts, spend our energies to be loyal to God and place our trust in Christ, we may run into all kinds of trouble, by the world's standards we may look unhappy, but much of our payment is still to come; and it will be joy eternal.

What confidence do we have to place our trust in God?

Paul tells us it was the will of the Father that Christ be crucified [Acts 2:23]. And since it is His will, God can do whatever He wants, and no plan of God can be upset. In fact, if the will of God cannot be upset, it is reasonable to assume that God uses our mistakes, our oversights, and our omissions for good. Our assurances rest in the belief of the greatest of good, the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

**The Resurrection proves that truth is stronger than falsehood.** Jesus came with the true idea of God and of goodness; his enemies brought about his death because they did not want their own false view destroyed. If the enemies had succeeded in finally obliterating Jesus, falsehood would have been stronger than truth. The Resurrection is the final guarantee of the indestructibility of the truth.

**The Resurrection proves that good is stronger than evil.** The forces of evil crucified Jesus and if there had been no Resurrection, these forces would have been triumphant. J.A. Froude, a great historian, wrote "...the world is built somehow on moral foundations, that in the long run it is well with the good, and in the long run it is ill with the wicked." But if the Resurrection had not taken place, then Froude's very principle would have been put in danger and we could never again be certain that goodness is stronger than evil.

**The Resurrection proves that love is stronger than hatred.** Jesus was the love of God incarnate. If there had been no Resurrection, it would have meant that people's hatred in the end conquered the love of God. The Resurrection is the triumph of love over all that hatred could do. The Resurrection is the final proof that love is stronger than hatred.

**The Resurrection proves that life is stronger than death.** If Jesus had died, never to rise again, it would have proved that death could take the loveliest and best life that ever lived and finally break it. The Resurrection is the final proof that life is stronger than death.

Pope Benedict XVI, once said: "...history must run its course, which brings about with it also human dramas and natural calamities. In it a design of salvation is developed that Christ has already brought to fulfillment in his Incarnation, Death and Resurrection...**let us welcome Christ's invitation to face events by trusting in his providential love.**

Let us not fear the future, even when it can appear with bleak [colors], because the God of Jesus, who entered history...guarantees that in every little but genuine act of love there is the entire sense of the universe, and that the one who does not hesitate to lose his own life for him, finds it again in fullness.