

Second Sunday of Easter 4-8-18

My dear friends, on Good Friday, we reflected that most Biblical characters sometimes expressed doubt either in their faith, or that their relationship with God, would bring them help in their trials and tribulations. Most Biblical giants went through doubts to the strength of faith. For instance, Abraham, our father in faith, had difficulty accepting that God would grant him a son (Gen 15:1-6), and so did his wife Sarai (Gen16:1-15). Later, Abraham's faith grows stronger, he was even ready to sacrifice his only son Isaac as a holocaust to God because he had learned that God provides. Only a few people seem to have served God and His children in the manner Moses and Aaron did. The Bible testifies that "since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face (Deuteronomy3:10). Earlier, before he learned to trust God, Moses had more "what ifs" and questions for God than anyone in the Bible (Ex.3:11-15, and 4:1-19). But God dealt patiently with him knowing that Moses was a very humble man (Num.12:3). Elijah, the boldest of all the historical prophets of God, (1Kings 18), the miracle worker, the man who shut the heavens, no rain, no dew, for three and one-half years, also felt alone, humiliated and ashamed. He even begged for death (1Kings 19:4-19). Even though fear and doubt compromised his assured confidence, the same fear fathered faith in God and patience with his people (1Kings 19:9-18).

In the Christian Bible, the gospel writers testify that Jesus was overwhelmed by fear when He meditated on His passion and death, and faced loneliness and denial (Mt 26:36-46, and Lk 22:39-46). But He always counted on the Father's love, so he resigned to the Father's will. All the disciples doubted Him at given times. Some of them even deserted, or denied even knowing Him (Mk. 14:50, Jn. 18:15-27). It was the same frightened disciples who later proclaimed Jesus the crucified Savior, and all but one of them died as martyrs for their faith.

The point of today's reflection is not to approve of doubt, because the people of the bible are full of doubts, rather to profess how each and every one of them progressed from doubt to a stronger faith. The congested mind which searches for answers beyond itself is preferable to a fixed and blinded mind which desires no growth and possesses neither knowledge of faith. The second point is that every person has moments of doubts: the times we doubt God and or the people in our lives. Our nature and relationship with God and one another do present dryness, emptiness and doubts which may foster congestion of the mind leading even to rejection. A Christian who has an intentional relationship with Christ does not stop at rejection; but prayerfully clings to God in prayer and meditation. In this manner, growth from doubt, rejection and emptiness leads to a stronger connection to God and loved ones. If the prophets and disciples were without doubt, then Jesus might not have their confession of faith and affirmation of Christ's divinity might have eluded the Church. If Thomas was without doubt, it would have been far-reaching to confer blessings on those who have not seen but believed. On this Sunday of Divine Mercy, as we thank God for lavishing His graces on His Church, let us pray that we may grow from ignorance to knowledge and from doubt to faith.

BRING YOUR DOUBTS TO THE LORD IN PRAYER.