**“Solid Foundation”**

All our readings today point us to the requirement of a solid foundation in other to enter the kingdom of God. Without a solid foundation, whatever is built, would be destroyed. If it is human character, it would lead to despair and unfulfilled life. If it is a house, without good foundation, the house would crumble to dust. If mechanical, it will not last. Our foundation is our faith in God. When we do not make God our foundation, our lives would be miserable and in the end, it would lead to our destruction in hell.

In our first reading, we heard about how God first degraded the land of Zebulun and Naphtali before glorifying it. Zebulun and Naphtali were the names of two of Jacob’s 12 sons They were given the land during Israel’s Exodus when the nations of Israel was being formed. The degrading of the two tribes was because they were not standing on solid foundation. This led to the beginning of the destruction of the kingdom of David.

The Assyrians, who were pagans, captured the two tribes, hauled their able bodied to Assyria and left some remnant. The remnant, had a problem practicing their faith and tradition. Instead, they mingled with the Assyrians and practiced the pagan faith. That was why Isaiah referred to the land as **“a place of darkness.”**

In Isaiah’s prophecy, we heard that the land would be glorified, and anguish would be no more, darkness would be dispelled, gloom and distress would be gone. They would see a great Light who would be the Messiah and then, they would stand on solid foundation of the New Covenant.

In our second reading, Paul was faced with the problem of division among the people of Corinth. They were divided about whom they were following. Different groups said, they were following Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas (Peter), and some said they were following Christ. Paul challenged all of them to build their faith on the solid foundation of Christ who is the only Messiah who came to save us.

Paul admitted to not being a great preacher. His reasoning was that should he be a great preacher, then it would be his style and words that would captivate the people and not his message of Jesus Christ. He would be the focus of the people and not Christ Himself. It is when Christ is our foundation, that we would realize the depth of what He did for us on the cross to redeem us.

Christ is our foundation. He is the corner stone of our faith. It is when we use the totality of who Christ is, and not part of His message that we will truly know Him and fully follow Him. That was why when leaving His Disciples, Jesus said to them, **“teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age”** (Matt 28:20).

Christ want us to follow all and not just part of His message. That is why in following Christ, we must actively observe all His teaching and not part of it. In following all, our faith would be based on solid foundation.

In our Gospel reading, after John the Baptizer’s martyrdom, Jesus, in starting His public ministry, fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah in our first reading. He started His public ministry as the great light in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. His mission statement was simple **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** Then, Jesus knowing that He had only three years for His mission started choosing His disciples who would be His helper in spreading His Gospel after He goes back to His Father and sits at His right hand.

He called ordinary men who were mostly fishermen and gave them the grace to do extraordinary things. He first called Simon, Andrew, James and John as four of His twelve Apostles to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. They became the foundation of His Church that He would build upon them as the solid foundation.

Can you imagine for a minute that an Architect and a Structural Engineer are designing a skyscraper? This skyscraper, would have numerous floors. Do you think they would start with a defective foundation? Or a solid foundation? I am sure, their design would start with a solid foundation that would support all the floors they would build on top of the foundation. If a skyscraper is built on a solid foundation, how much more would God not build His Church on a solid foundation?

We can imagine each floor of the building as a generation until the end of time. For the purpose of clarity, let us assume each generation lasts a 100yrs. On getting to the 15th or 20th floor, the builders decided to change the perfect material chosen by God Himself in building the previous floors. Is there an assurance that the next floors chosen by us would not crumble?

We can never repay God for His gifts to us in coming to teach, suffer, and die for us on the cross as a common thief. What we can do to show our love and gratitude to God is by being faithful to His teachings. And like the Apostles and Paul, lead others to Him by being Christ-like.

God knowing our response would be, to follow Him, left us His followers, a greater gift to strengthen us. He left us His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. He left us Himself so we can eat His Flesh and drink His Blood and receive His grace. The least we can do in receiving this infinitely worthy gift, is to receive Him worthily.

As we come with utmost reverence to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask our selves, is my faith based on a solid foundation.