**“Our Search for** **God”**

All our readings today point us to the phrase, **“Our Search for God.”** Everyone is in search of God even though some people might not know it. We are all in search of God even as God is in search of us. Our search for God requires us to believe that every word He speaks is full of grace. It requires us to know that His words are efficacious. It requires us to persevere in the face of adversity and persecution.

God is the one who first initiates the search in us by stirring our desire to know Him. God said, about His new covenant, **“I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people”** (Jeremiah 31:33). By first placing His law into our hearts, God initiates our desire to know Him. However, because He also gave us our free-will, we have the choice of accepting or rejecting His invitation.

Our response to God’s invitation is based on our faith in God. Our faith in God must move us to overcome any reluctance we might have about accepting His will for us. Our faith in God must move us to use our free-will to do His will because He has written His law upon our hearts. We must realize that through painful and joyful events in our lives, God is guiding us with the loving hand of a Father. Though God could force us to love Him, He respects the free-will He has given us.

In our first reading, through Prophet Isaiah, we heard about how God is at work in the world. God said, His word will not come back to Him empty regardless of our reception of His word. God knows that there will be some who will accept His word and some who will reject His word. But in the end, many would accept it and they will be saved. It is by having faith in God and in His word that we will be saved.

God compares our reception of His words to rain watering the earth. Water makes plants grow. We use water for cleaning and we need water so we can stay alive. Therefore, God’s words make us grow in faith in Him. His word cleanse us of our sins and washes us clean as in our baptism into Christ. His word gives us live as the Eucharist gives us live.

Also in the Bible, water represents total destruction as presented in the flood of Noah’s time. In that account, those who were destroyed, were those who did not believe in the word of God. So, We should listen to His word. We should let His word soak into us like the rain on a patched land. His word should be like a downpour upon the grass. In the end, God who searches, will search the mind and the depth of our hearts.

In our second reading, St Paul said God’s search for us and our search for God would lead us to suffering. However, he reminds us that our sufferings of the present life, should they be terribly painful, or burdensome, such as when we have to take care of our aging parents, or raise our grand children, we should not let our suffering bother us because of the glory that would be our reward. Our suffering is the fire God litein us to move us closer to Him. It is Suffering that moves the heart of God the most.

The glory Paul refers to, is our hope that leads us to find God in our search for Him. That future glory, is not something we can fully understand or see now, anymore than a child can see himself or herself as an adult. It is a glory we hope for by faith, as we search for God. However, our hope for the future is also linked to passionate call for justice. Paul notes that the entire world of creation yearns for freedom from injustice, slavery, and corruption. And that as the firstfruits of the Spirit, our first down payment for a share in the divine life, comes from our baptism into Christ.

In our gospel reading, in the parable of the sower, Jesus gave us an account of how the word of God works in us. This is one of the parables Jesus gave an answer to in the Gospels. Matthew set up the scenery by having Jesus in a boat because of the large crowd. You see, in those days there were no microphones and loud speakers. We might say, Jesus used the surface of the water as a loud speaker. His words would bounce of the surface of the water, so all could hear.

In this parable, Jesus teaches us that some people would hear the word of God and would not be converted or return to God. They did not want to understand the word of God in the person of Jesus Christ, leading them to do things contrary to the Gospel. Others would later in their live reject the word of the kingdom because due to trials and tribulations, they think there is no God and they do things there own way. Others are distracted and reject the word of God because of lust of the flesh, power, and material things that do not last.

Like people of Jesus’ time, we are tempted to sacrifice our christian values for what the world has to offer. We might not worship the golden calf or wooden idols, but we are influenced by our environment. We need a constant antidote to the idols of materialism and lust for power. That is why Mass is important. Here we are given the guiding principles of Christian living in scripture and strengthened by spiritual food in the Eucharist.

However, God’s search for us would not be foiled by our human limitations, resistance, or the work of the devil. These obstacles are symbolized as birds, stones, or thorns, by our Lord in His parable. God’s word in the person of His Son would bring about those who do God’s will and become true family members of the kingdom of God.

Then, there are those people who believe that there is one God who has created us and given us a share in His divine life through baptism. He is the God who provides’ resources of this earth to nourish us. He is the God who feeds us spiritually in the Eucharist. He is the God who looks upon us with compassion in all our needs. His word is the only word we should listen to. We should not listen to the words of the world that would lead us to eternal damnation.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask for His grace to always listen to His word.