



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

**THIS SUNDAY June 25 & BEYOND**

## Be Not Afraid



In this Sunday's gospel reading (Matthew 10:16-33) Jesus tells us repeatedly not to be anxious or afraid, and the readings remind us that no matter how in the dark, surrounded, or outnumbered we feel in the face of evil, death, and sin, God has not and will not abandon us. One of the biggest goals of the evil one is to

make fear the determining factor in our lives because it ruins our relationships with God and our neighbor. Fear makes us retreat into ourselves, put up walls, and heighten our defenses, all of which prevent us from being able to trust God, maintain hope in difficult circumstances, and offer ourselves in love.

Naturally, then, anyone who's growing in faith, hope, and love becomes a target for Satan's scare tactics, and we see this throughout the readings. The first reading and the psalm both describe how Satan holds up the fears of our hearts, like abandonment, loneliness, and bodily harm to try to squelch our zeal and deter us from doing God's will. But the psalmist remains confident in God's compassion and mercy, and Jeremiah describes God as a "dread warrior" at his side, and his word as fire in his bones. In his typically paradoxical way, Jesus holds up the same things for his disciples, but tells them not to be afraid because God will be at work in them. Even when He says that the only fear we should have is spiritual death, it's actually as much an encouragement to stay in His love as it is a warning about punishment.

While we may not be facing the kind of intense persecution the readings describe, we all face inner struggles in doing God's will. For most of us this is something more along the lines of swallowing our snappy comeback, and instead being the first one to apologize. Or it could be confronting someone who's hurt us when it would be easier to just distance ourselves and let the relationship wither. Whatever form doing God's will takes, the first step is always making ourselves vulnerable by refusing to do or say anything that's not loving, even if it means opening ourselves up to some suffering.

That's scary, but we can step forward anyway because we already know more than Jeremiah, the psalmist, and even the disciples listening to Jesus for the first time. We know that Jesus already rose from the dead so that even our dying to self brings life. We know that Jesus has left us His own Body and Blood in the Eucharist and has sent us the Holy Spirit to help us. We can see Him at work in the lives of the saints and in our own lives as well.

Where do fear or anxiety most easily slip into your life? What is the easiest way to make you feel threatened or defensive? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where your life is smaller than God's will, and pray for the love of God to cast out any fear in you and in others through you.

Father McQueen

### CALENDAR

SUNDAY:           8:00a Low Mass (Church)  
                      9:30a Christian Formation (Fireside Room)  
                      10:30a Solemn Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue*—

*Note: Child care is provided at the 8:00a, 10:30a Mass, Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.*

MONDAY           7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY:        Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

THURSDAY       6:30p Evening Prayer (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY:           9:00a Morning Prayer (St. Mary's Chapel)  
                      9:30a Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

#### AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)  
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY        11:00a Rosary in St. Mary's Chapel  
                      11:30a MASS in St. Mary's Chapel  
                      Noon Potluck Luncheon in the Parish Hall