



**Blessed Sacrament Parish**  
**Homily by Father Mike Kuse**  
**June 25, 2017 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Reading I Jeremiah 20:10-13**

**Psalm 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35**

**Reading II Romans 5:12-15**

**Gospel Mathew 10:26-33**

**Homily**

Fear no one. Jesus is not saying, "Don't be afraid of anyone." What he is saying, "If the grace of God and the Spirit of God is within you, then you just don't have a problem in life." It's only when that Spirit is not active in your life — that's when you need to think for a moment, "Am I with God, or against God?" It is never, "Is God with me or not with me?" God is always there. The question is, "Am I with God, or am I not with God?"

I think all of us could stand up this morning and tell some story of a stupid thing we did, maybe many stupid things. And after we did them we thought, "I don't know why I did that. It didn't help me, it didn't help anybody else." But it is those moments that resurrect those moments of faith in us that say, "You know, God understands. So if I trust God, I can always move beyond. Any time in my life when I had fear it was because fear takes away that openness to Spirit." As we sang coming into church, "Open my eyes, Lord. Let me see."

You read a lot in the news today and watch television enough that can cause you to become overwhelmed with things that go on. Recently there was a story about a group of young people on a college campus who were in a fraternity and they decided to have a party. A lot of students came and naturally at a party on a college campus they started to drink. Then they started doing drugs, and what followed was that some of the young men in the fraternity began taking advantage of some of the students attending the party. There was one young man who was at the event and thought the party was just going to be a fun time. But things got worse as the evening went on, and he was just not comfortable being there.

None of the members of the fraternity were in any condition to listen to him, so he just left the party. He wasn't quite sure what to do but he knew what had happened was wrong. He thought, "I know all these people. I know they didn't mean to be doing what they were doing, but I am not comfortable with what has happened." So he went to a counselor and explained the whole story and asked, "What should I do, or what would you do?"

The counselor said, "Well, you need to follow your conscience. You need to go to those in authority and tell them about what happened so they can do something about it — because you can't. It is not hurting anyone in your fraternity, but it is a way they can acknowledge their actions and the risks they are taking with their lives." And so he did that. The counselor said, "You have done the right thing, and I will stand behind you." So he went and shared with someone what took place at that party because he believed that what had happened was really not right. When the group found out that he was the one who ratted on them, the whole group went out that night and found him, beat him up and just left him. They didn't care if he was dead or alive. Someone found the young man. And the moral of the story is: The young man did what he knew he had to do, and he didn't fear anything. That story reminds us of Jeremiah and what Jeremiah went through in the First Reading.

You may have a similar experience in your own life where you had to take a stand, set yourself apart, just because you knew it wasn't good for you, or them. That is not an easy thing to do, but that is what Jesus is saying to us, "Go out now and build my Kingdom. I want my Kingdom to flourish and just know not everyone is going to be like you. Some people are not going to like you, and you are going to have to resonate and count on me for the strength in your life." All of us do stupid things. But if no one addresses us, the stupid things will continue and may become more serious.

Something that takes place in churches has happened to me two or three times in parishes where I served. I was at this one church and I started getting suspicious because at a certain Mass the same people ushered every single week. They wanted to usher every single time. They would always make sure that they collected all the money, and would take the collection to the place where it belonged. And I thought, "Something is very suspicious about this." And I began to realize the collections were not the same. And so I set a trap for each one of them. Then finally I realized what was happening. I confronted them and said, "You know, you may think no one is watching, but I see what you are doing. First of all, the money that people give goes to God, it's not for you. So I am telling you that from now on, you will never usher again in this church, not because I don't like you but because you need to turn your life around and be able to know what is right."

That is not easy to do. It is not disliking the person, it is disliking what they are doing and that something is harmful to themselves. All of you who are parents do this all the time. You tell your children, "That is not the right thing to do." And your children will listen. They still may do the wrong thing, but they are listening, and you are helping them to change things about themselves so that later on in life they will be giving similar advice to their own children. None of us wants to turn away from God, and God says, "Take that risk and do something that is right." And if it is right — you will know that the strength of God is with you.

So this morning we are a community of believers and Jesus is saying to us, "Fear no one."

He doesn't mean, "Don't be afraid of anyone." He says, "Just know that no one can destroy you when you are proclaiming the Gospel." And he is telling us, "Be strong in your faith. Be bold in what you teach and what you preach."

So today may you and I take the Gospel to heart. You don't have to leave church and go out and check out the whole city of Quincy. First of all, we have to look within ourselves. We need to ask, "Is there anything in me that would cause someone to say to me — that is not the right thing for you to do." Or if I see a problem in someone else I need to think, "How can I talk to this person in a very loving and beautiful way so he or she will change direction?"

All of those young men in the fraternity needed to get their lives back on the right path. We don't know the rest of the story, but I am sure as time goes on they will never forget what happened, what they did to the young man, and how it changed their lives.

May you and I be people of courage and may we always have that desire to say, "What would Jesus do?" Jesus wouldn't condemn anyone. He would have just walked into that party and said, "Throw this junk out of here. I just want to be with you. I want to see the beautiful person that you are."

And he would say to the ushers, "You don't need that. Let the money be used for those in need. Let it be used for the poor. You don't have to take things for yourself."

So Jesus says to us, "Are you willing to take that risk? Fearing no one, so that God's love will be in the heart of each and every person."

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