

## TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

In the first reading we see prophet Jeremiah finding hope in a threatening situation.

Jeremiah was called at the early age of twenty-three to the prophetic office. As a prophet he spoke fearlessly against the unfaithfulness of his people. And because his prophetic message was too demanding they plotted against him. He was imprisoned for a time. And later they decided to kill him.

In the first part of today's reading we see him on the edge of despair. On all sides he heard the people whispering against him and plotting against him saying, **"Denounce! Let us denounce him."**

In the second part of the reading he turned his despair to hope. He found hope in a threatening situation. He encountered God's presence in his darkest moments.

**"But the Lord is with me, like a mighty champion... Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has rescued the life of the poor from the power of the wicked."**

As Christians, we, sometimes, find ourselves on the edge of despair as a result of sickness, suffering, rejection, isolation, disappointment, betrayal from close friends, insecurity, speaking the truth, championing the cause of what is right and what have you. In such moments let remember that God is there to give us his gift of hope. In such moments let us pray to the Lord and in his great love he will answer us.

Today's gospel reading is the last part of Jesus' instruction to the Twelve Apostles before he sent them on mission. Jesus sent them out fully aware of what they were going to face. Jesus knew that they would encounter resistance and even life threatening opposition yet he sent them to go and proclaim what they had heard and learned from him on housetops; to everyone. He told them not be afraid to speak in the light because there is always the cost of speaking God's word; doing his work. He told them not to allow the cost of preaching the gospel impede their work. **"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul."** They should not be afraid of them because their power is restricted to this earth only.

Like Jeremiah and the Apostles we all are called to make the word of God known; to make the Gospel known always and everywhere; in a materialistic culture of our world today. We have been sent to proclaim what we have heard from him and do what we have seen at home and outside home, within the Christian community and in front of non-believers.

We are called to boldly live our faith openly by being truthful and faithful to our promises and honest in our dealings. In doing so we may face opposition and criticism but in such moments we should not give in to despair for as Christians we are never dispensed from witnessing to Christ, no matter the hardship involved.

Being a Christian can be costly but there is never reason for us to be discouraged or afraid. Christ is never so close to us as when we suffer for his sake. He is ready at all times to strengthen and to defend us.

What is expected of us Christians today, then, is boldness, not fear. We should be bold to witness to Christ in all situations, rather than deny him or compromise our faith.