

Homily For Tuesday of the 15th Week of Ordinary Time- Year 1

St Peter's 8:30 AM Mass - July 16, 2019

Exodus 2:1-15 "Pharaoh's daughter took him as her son, named him Moses: I drew him out of water."

Psalms 69 " You who seek God, let your hearts revive. The Lord does not despise his own in bonds."

Matthew 11:20-24 "If deeds of power done in you had been done there, they would have repented."

To Whom Much Is Given

The Women of Exodus

A heroic woman. A compassionate woman. A smart and courageous woman. Three women combine to open the door for the greatest events of Israel's history and for the ultimate salvation of the world.

Moses' mother hid him for three months. She did that because there was an edict that Hebrew male children should be killed.

Moses' sister stood watch over her tiny brother. She went to Pharaoh's daughter and proposed the idea of having a Hebrew woman nurse the child. And it was she who brought Moses' own mother to do just that.

Pharaoh's daughter had the infant Moses brought to her. She took pity on the child even though she knew it was under Pharaoh's curse. She even took him as her son. Finally, she is the one who gave him the name that is so familiar to us, Moses, Israel's great leader and redeemer from slavery.

The Men of Exodus

I am sad to report that the men of today's Exodus reading don't look nearly as good as the women. There is the Egyptian guard beating a Hebrew slave. There is Moses who kills that guard. There are two Hebrew men fighting each other, who won't let Moses break it up, then report Moses to Pharaoh, who wants to kill Moses, who runs away in fear. This is not yet a people with a destiny, although the women foreshadow its greatness. Fortunately, we have a God who redeems us through both the women and the men.

Matthew

Moses was under a curse for the crime of being born a Hebrew male. But Jesus proclaimed a curse on three Israelite towns for a different reason. "Woe to you." Those are the words of a curse that Jesus directs at those cities. You had the opportunity to repent, he tells them, because you know God and have witnessed his deeds of power.

Often, people like to quote Pope Francis out of context, saying, Who am I to judge? But our faith tells us that there will be a day of judgment and that our action or inaction will lead to judgment. Tyre, Sidon, and especially Sodom, were Gentile cities of great corruption and immorality. They were already under judgment, so this comparison would come as quite a shock. Even Capernaum, Jesus' home base, is headed for a humiliation even worse than Sodom.

Judgment Today

We are used to technological 'miracles' in our day. But such miracles only dazzle us temporarily. This becomes more and more true as we are capable of more impressive special effects. Fireworks and car chases, how long do we remember them? Even genuine miracles don't typically convert us. We still have to give our hearts. God's works of power, in the Bible and in our lives, open the door but we still have to walk through that door.

Jesus invites sinners to his kingdom. He invites us to that conversion without which one cannot enter the kingdom. As he says, there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents. But the sinner - that's us - has to recognize his or her state and be able to pray with today's psalmist: "I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold. I sink in deep waters and the flood washes over me. My prayer is to you, O Lord. Let your salvation, O God, protect me." We are in the mud with our sin. Judgment is upon us. That's the reality.

Call To Action

It is said that with great privilege comes great responsibility. With the great privilege of knowing Jesus and his saving power, comes great responsibility. Those

three Galilean towns had incentives to believe in Jesus that most will never have. What about us? We will likely find areas in our lives that are not fully surrendered to the lordship of Jesus, even though Christ is truly present among us, in his Word, in his Eucharist, and in his Church. To us much has been given and so much will be required.

Our Lady of Mt Carmel

Mount Carmel overlooks the place of the greatest battle between good and evil. Queen Jezebel's 400 prophets of Baal on the one side, and the lone prophet of the one true God, Elijah, on the other. That battle was really no contest because, after all, God is the God of spectacular victory.

The Carmelites have made this place one of holy contemplation. They consider the Blessed Virgin Mary to be a perfect model of the interior life of prayer, as well as a model of virtue, in the person who was closest in life to Jesus Christ. Carmel is the symbol of the life wholly dedicated to the quest for God, in whom there is no condemnation for those who know the gift they have been given.