

# Nineteenth Sunday of the Year- August 11, 2019

Wisdom 18: 6-9 Hebrews 11: 1-2, 8-12 Luke 12: 35-40

In the outline that Saint Luke is using in his gospel to present the ministry of Jesus and to answer for us what it takes to be a follower of Christ, Jesus and his followers are on a journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. But Jerusalem represents betrayal, condemnation, and execution to Jesus. To offer an encouragement on faith to his followers at this point makes sense. They will need faith in Jesus to sustain them in the time ahead. For us, too, as followers of Jesus, a strengthening our own faith is likewise important.

But, what is faith? Faith is the ability that we, as humans, possess and which we can energize. We do so everyday in seeking ways to accomplish simple things. If we turn a faucet, we have faith that water will flow. If we turn a switch, we have faith that a light will come on. Faith is a simple fact of our lives. If it is present in so many small things, how much more is it present with respect life itself. Faith in a loving God is essential in the living out of our lives. How we act is not to be based on fear or obligation. Rather it is to be based on faith and the hope that faith gives us. It is based on an anticipation of what a rich relationship with God achieves for us.

☒ Through the inspired word of the Scriptures we have heard today, examples of faith are given to us. From the author of the Book of Wisdom we heard how the Passover ritual was to

be celebrated. It is this ritual celebration that is a recognition of the goodness of God that the Chosen People had experienced. In the midst of slavery, they were delivered because of faith in God. Firm faith and hope in a loving God allows for the anticipation of deliverance. In a relationship with, as in any genuine relationship we might experience, faith and trust gives value, dimension and depth to that relationship.

The example of Abraham is also put before us in the Letter to the Hebrews. Despite all the odds against the fulfillment of the promise he understood that God had made to him, he placed his faith in God. The promise was achieved. He was no longer a nomad but occupied a land for settlement. He became the father of many nations despite his old age and that of his wife.

Then we heard the example that is used by Jesus. The servants know their master. They know what he wants. They know what he expects. They go about their duties, not out of obligation, but out of respect, awareness, appreciation and anticipation. They know how best to fulfill their particular role in life. This is what is acknowledged by the master in his service to them.

When someone does something for us, not because of obligation, but out of genuine love and respect, faith and trust – how much more does that mean. This shows the value that is placed on the relationship to that person and to ourselves as well. We are called to realize that the relationship with our loving God is not based on fear or even obligation. Rather, it is to be based on trust, faith, hope and the anticipation that these factors reflect. It is this type of response, a loving and appreciative response, that Christ seeks to teach us. It is in

this way that we are to live our daily lives and it is in this way that we reveal our relationship with our good and gracious God.