

Twelfth Sunday Year A. Fear not those who kill the Body. 25th June 2023.

When God created the universe, he acknowledged that everything was good. That is, both materials and human persons. If everything was good, there is no reason why we should be afraid, or life be difficult to us.

From the experience of the prophet Jeremiah in our first reading, we could say that something is wrong somewhere. They people sought to kill the prophet Jeremiah not because he deserved it, but because of his ability to speak the truth to the community. We may ask this intelligent question, if what God created are good, why did God allow all this evil in the world? Why did His servant prophet Jeremiah have to face persecution from His enemy? Didn't He have the power to stop the evil that is befalling His people? It's true what God created was good, but Satan, the devil was the reason why evil came into the world. The situation of our world is becoming more devastating, the killing of innocent souls, government's inability to cater for its citizens, increase in the death rate because of the lack of good medical care and the ongoing crisis and war.

Looking at all these, Jesus said, "Have no fear," and do not be afraid of those who kill the body but can't kill the souls but fear him only who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Amidst this challenging world, we must note that God is with us as he promises in the gospel of Matthew 'I will be with you till the very end of time' 28:20. If Jesus promise us, then, we should be consoled and stand on his promises. Persecution is not aliens to our Christian journey, it's part and parcel of us; even our master Jesus faces persecution.

During his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus cries out father 'if it is possible let this cup of suffering be taken away from me, but not my will but your Will be done. We would all wish that suffering is not part of us; but we just must accept it as our cross. By the Holy cross Jesus redeems the world: we can only attend to heavenly Abbot through the cross. Cross is the prerequisite for authentic discipleship. There is no Christianity without the cross, it's our source of healing even though it may appear fearful. It is no wonder Jesus said, "Whoever wants to become my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mk. 8:34).

Beloved in Christ, Jesus assures to identify with us in times of sorrow, trials, and frustration. Like prophet Jeramiah, let us commit our cause to God.

Peace,

Fr. Jingbe Simon