

Sunday June 20, 2021  
**12th Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Parishioner Reflection**

*By: Mary Jean Giliberto*

God has authority over all. He has authority over the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. The readings today speak explicitly of God's authority over nature, and by logical extension, his authority over all. God asks Job "Who shut the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?" The question is a rhetorical question to Job because Job knows that God is the one who set the boundaries of the sea when he created the world. God goes on to say, "I set bounds for it, and set bars and doors, and said 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped.'" The bigger question to Job is the following question. If Job believes God has such immense power over nature, why does he doubt God's authority over his life?

Job does not curse God for all the bad things that have been happening to him, but Job demands to know why. The same question echoes through the ages. Why do bad things happen to good people? Some questions are unanswerable in human terms. If we have faith, we believe that God has the answer. If we have faith, then we also believe that God may choose in His Wisdom not to reveal the answer. It is a battle of faith versus knowledge. We convince ourselves that if we knew the reason for our suffering, then our suffering would be easier to bear. Knowledge in itself does not make suffering easier to bear, but faith in God does. God wants us to have faith in Him at all times, even when (and especially when) we do not understand.

The psalm exhorts us to give thanks to God for his steadfast love endures forever. "They cried to the Lord in their distress; he made the storm be still and the waves of the sea were hushed". We all have many storms to pass through in our lives. God has the power to calm the storms. When God calms the storms, it may or may not mean the end of pain and suffering, but for those who remain steadfast in faith, He sends a spiritual peace and calm that enables us to face what we need to face.

In the second reading, St Paul tells us that the love of Christ urges us on. We no longer regard things from a human point of view. From a purely human point of view, Christ's death by crucifixion makes no sense. From a divine point of view, Christ's obedience, suffering and death, and resurrection have brought salvation to the world. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new." Christ is our great hope, a hope that will never disappoint. Hope in Christ transforms us into a new creation. Hope in Christ and faith in God are the answer to the question of pain and suffering. We no longer live our lives for ourselves,

but we live them for Christ who died for us and was raised for us. Everything Christ did, He did for us. Likewise, if everything we do, we do for Christ, then no storm will be able to disturb our inner calm.

In the Gospel, Jesus is asleep in the boat when the storm arose. His disciples woke Him and asked, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" In the storms of our lives, it is tempting to think that God is asleep or that He does not care, but nothing could be further from the truth. God, who has power over the wind and the sea, has power over all. Faith in God and hope in Christ are the key to unleashing this power. I am reminded of the words of the morning offering prayer that I was taught when I was younger: "Dear Lord, I do not know what will happen to me today. I only know that nothing will happen that was not foreseen by You, and directed to my greater good from all eternity." God is our loving Father and he desires our greater good, both now and forever.

As we celebrate Father's Day today, we honor all fathers, especially God our Father. May God bless you with an abundance of faith, hope and love.