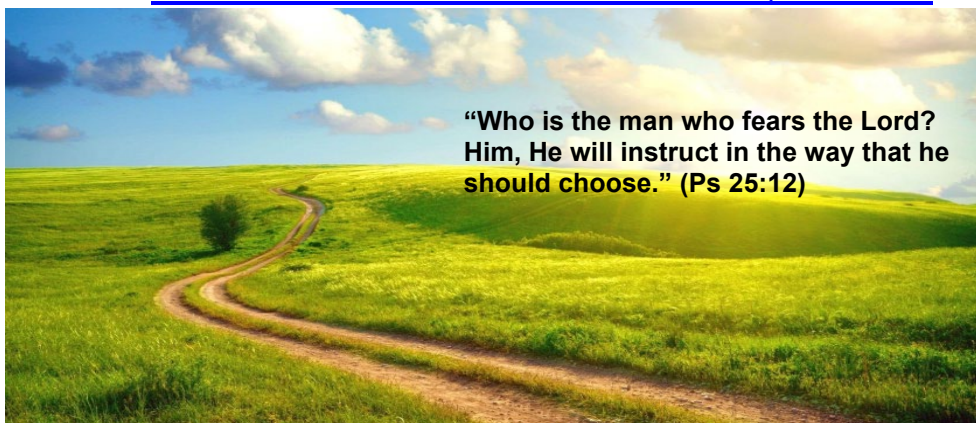


'I CAME TO BRING FIRE'
TWELFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME, JUNE 21st



“Jesus said to the Twelve: “Fear no one. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known.

What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge.

Even all the hairs of your head are counted.

So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.” (Matthew 10:26-33)

I. “FEAR NO ONE”:

Petition: O Almighty God, say to my soul: “*Do not fear anymore! I am with you.*” What or whom would fear someone who lives in your Presence, within you, and you within him? What can I fear if you my God full of power and love are with me? Of what could frighten me if you King and Lord of history and All-powerful are at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage? My God, even I walk in the valley of darkness I will not fear, because you are with me, you are Emmanuel, God-with-me.

O Jesus, make your words real in my life: “*remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*” (Mt 28:20) Recognizing and knowing with the certainty of faith that, “*all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*” (Mt 28:18)

Here is a definition of fear that can help us to understand and clarify of what we are talking. **Fear is the reaction of the human person before some evil real or imaginary that is going to happen to me or to others that I love.**

Therefore, fear is about **something evil** and something that is not already

happening but will happen; so **it is about something of the future.**

What is evil for me? What it is contrary to what is good for me. Evil cannot be define or understand by itself, **evil is an absence or lack or privation of some concrete good.**

This is very important to understand: **our fears are created by our desires.**

Because I love health I am afraid or fearful of getting sick. More I love health more fear I’ve of getting sick. Because I love peace and safety I am afraid of everything that could harm the peace and safety of me and my family.

More I love something more I fear to lose it, whatever.

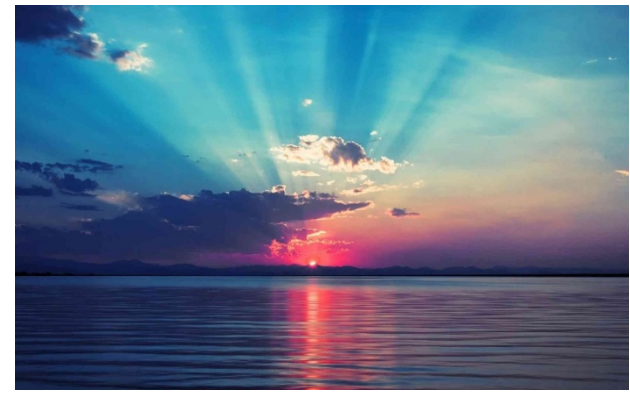
More I love my football team wins more I fear it will be defeat by other football team.

When you fear God you don’t fear anything else; on the contrary when you don’t fear God you fear everything else.

God, Jesus, invites us to not fear anyone. So, fear is never from God, only the fear of God that is a gift of the Holy Spirit. But it is a little different because is a fear that had to be learned, and is coming from the love to God. “*The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.*” (Isaiah 11:2-3) How can his delight be the fear of the Lord? Obviously, because it is a different kind of fear. “*I will give them one heart and one way, so that they will always fear Me for their own good and for the good of their children after them. I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never turn away from doing good to them, and I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will never turn away from Me. Yes, I will rejoice in doing them good*” (Jer 32:39-41)

Fear of the Lord is more than any other thing **fear to me because I can very easy separate myself from God.** Fear of the Lord is to understand in depth that “***without me you can do nothing.***” (Jn 15:5) in fact, fear of the Lord is coming from the knowledge of the Goodness of the Lord, and being aware that He alone is the Source and origin of all good, virtue, goodness, and spiritual gift. Saint Ignatius of Loyola expresses it clearly in the Spiritual Exercises “***to contemplate how all the good things and gifts descend from above, as my poor power from the supreme and infinite power from above; and so justice, goodness, pity, mercy, etc.; as from the sun descend the rays, from the fountain the waters, etc.***”

(Contemplation to Gain Love)
 The better a person knows the Love, Beauty, Wisdom and Power of God, the more he knows who God is and greater is the fear of separating from Him, because greater is the love to God. “***All our fear is in love.***” (St Hilary of Poitiers)





Fear of the Lord is at the root of faith and is interwoven with love. “What does the Lord, your God, ask of you but to fear the Lord, your God, and... to love... the Lord, your

God, with all your heart and all your soul” (Dt 10: 12).

There is no greater evil than separating from God. In fact, the total eternal separation from God is called Hell.

Fear is never coming from God. “My little flock do not fear anymore, the Father has pleased in giving you the Kingdom.” (Lk 12:32) “God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” (2 Tim 1:7)

The contrary of fear is hope or faith with trust. Hope is awaiting everything from God from his Mercy and Power.

Confidence, hope and trust expel fear from the human heart. (cf. Ps 27)

Jesus several times put clear that the one who has faith has no fear. “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. **He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?”** (Mk 4:38-40) And to the father of the girl who was sick and died “Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, **‘Do not fear, only believe.’**” (Mk 4:37; Lk 8:50)

In Jesus is accomplish the Cantic of Zachariah the father of John the Baptist: “that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, **might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.** (Lk 1:74-75)

Thanks to fear of the Lord we are not afraid of the evil that rages in history and we vigorously resume our journey through life. It is precisely thanks to fear of God that we are not afraid of the world and of all its problems, that we are not afraid of people, for God is more powerful. Pope John XXIII once said, “**Those who believe do not tremble because, fearing God who is good, they are not afraid of the world or of the future**”. And this is what the Prophet Isaiah says: “**Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak. Say to those whose hearts are frightened: ‘Be strong, fear not!’**” (Is 35:3-4).

II. EVEN ALL THE HAIRS OF YOUR HEAD ARE COUNTED:

Petition: O All-knowing God, for You nothing is secret, nothing is hidden, you take care with love, gentleness and power of everything, even the hairs of my head are in your eternal design; I beg You All-powerful Jesus, to increase my faith in your infinite providence, in your care for me, You my “God lead me about, You instruct me, You keep Me as the apple of Your eye.” (Dt 32:10) God is always with us in the circumstances and events of our lives; in the

smallest and in the greatest events: “*The Lord Himself goes before you; He will be with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid or discouraged.*” (Dt 31:8) “*Not one sparrow falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted*” (Mt 10:30)

He is with us with his love “*But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: **Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. **For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you. Do not fear, for I am with you.***” (Is 43:1-5)

Paying attention to God within us and his work of sanctification in our souls and lives is the essence of faith. This is all about “*the good news of God’s grace,*” (Acts 20:24) his powerful grace working in us; that leads us to recognize the power of God who works in history and in our history and thus to open ourselves to the continual sanctifying work of God in the very little things.

Our life is for recognizing the mystery at work of divine love and power that transcendence every thought or thinking, “*God the Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all*” (Eph 4:6).

Our trustful surrender and abandonment to divine Providence, to the concrete of his love and Power, outwardly and inwardly is our holiness. It is our fiat, our “*your will be done*” what let our Almighty God to do His plan of holiness in us, and to bring us to the transformative union of love with Him.

III. THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD (Psalm 23):

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Surely your goodness and love

will follow me all the days of my life;

I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Fr. Armando Marsal, DCJM.

