

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jul 14th 2018

Today, in our readings, we are reminded of the power of faith and the inevitable persecutions as a result of our faith ... of our trust in God's love for us, and in the promise of everlasting life. As we know, the journey of faith can be difficult and filled with trials and tribulations along the way. As disciples, we are not 'above our master,' and therefore likely to experience the same fate as Jesus. As followers of Christ, we will be ridiculed for our values, we will experience hardships and we'll endure suffering. And yet, the message of courage and accompaniment is clear; Jesus reassures us by saying "do not be afraid," several times throughout this passage.

The lines that struck me as I read today were:

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.

In these lines, I am reminded at how intimately God knows me (us), and how much I am (we are) deeply loved. On a practical level, I think of the daily task of brushing my almost five year-old daughter's hair. It's a labor of love to tame her hair in preparation for leaving the house each morning. The dark, thick, straight locks hang below her shoulders in a tangled mess most of the day. The several minutes it takes me to (painstakingly? lovingly? hurriedly?) brush it each morning (a difficult task for us both, most days) offer me only a glimpse into counting all the hairs on her head. The time, effort and desire I have for her, as displayed by the routine of brushing her hair each morning, is only a fraction of the intimacy God has of us. On a similar level, it is noticeable to see the confidence that my daughter displays knowing she is loved and sent off for the day, a tip of the iceberg in knowing her worth is "more than many sparrows." Maybe I can also learn from my daughter about the confidence to meet the world each day with the profound understanding that my worth is also "more than many sparrows," in God's eyes.

Today, let us take God's love for us, God's reassurance ('be not afraid') and God's accompaniment with us, as we endure the sufferings of today.

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