

## Homily

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in OT

February 7, 2021

I recently had to replace my water heater. My old one stopped working, so for a few days, we had to take baths with water heated on the stove. Oh, how I missed my water heater and how I missed taking hot showers, even if only for a few days.

When the new water heater was installed and generating lots of hot water, I remember taking my first hot shower and relishing the luxury of a continuous stream of hot water.

Midway through this first shower, I was already thinking about other things – what items were on my to-do list for the day; what were Donna and I going to do in our free time. Then it hit me; I had already forgotten my gratitude for a continuous stream of hot water.

How often do I take things for granted? I thought about all the conveniences we all have enjoyed throughout our lifetime; things that didn't even exist just a few years ago and now are so commonplace, we get upset if we lose it.

Air conditioning in 1953; the microwave oven in 1967; Amazon in 1998; Facebook in 2004; YouTube in 2005; cell phones in the mid-80's. The first I-Phone came out in 2007; the android a year later. Just think about how much our lives changed since these things came into being! We have so many things now that make our lives easier. Now how do we react when our smart phone battery runs dry?

My problem is that I too often take things for granted, and while this is true, what is much more important is people, and how I sadly often take the people closest to me for granted. I have become used to being with the people who mean the most to me. They say, "familiarity breeds contempt." I don't necessarily agree with that, but I will suggest that familiarity breeds neglect.

In the first reading, we hear of Job's suffering, the drudgery of his life; he sleeps only to wake to another day only to end the day with no hope. He struggles with this seemingly endless trial and, after multiple 'friends' suggest this is punishment, which he rejects, he eventually questions God who tells Job to 'man up' and appreciate the wonders of God's creation, how God is in charge and how Job benefits from all this.

Job relents and accepts God's power and authority, saying, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Paul, in his letter today, describes how he has been given a task, a responsibility, for which he admits he accepts out of obedience to God, expecting nothing in return except God's favor. If only all of us responded to our daily to-do lists the same way. We are all called to some divine job; Matrimony – to our spouse and our children; Holy Orders – to our bishop and his flock; the

consecrated life – to the community and its disciplines. All of us are called and each of us has responded in some way.

How we respond will determine how we look at our life as either mundane, a drudgery or as a joy, a blessing, a delight, as God looks upon us and all His creation.

This is the fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time. I don't care for the word Ordinary because it suggests commonplace, usual, regular. Maybe that's why we often come to church out of habit or a sense of obligation instead of with a sense of awe and excitement. In the context of the liturgical calendar, Ordinary means Ordinal, as in numbers, counting and sequential. With that in mind, let's look at the previous Sunday's leading to today:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – Baptism of the Lord – John expressing his subordination to Jesus and something about His sandal straps

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 'Follow me' – a couple of guys start following Jesus wondering where He is staying

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 'Follow me, again' – Jesus telling these fishermen to quit their jobs

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Jesus speaks with Authority – the people in the temple seem amazed at how Jesus taught then drives out demons all with some new authority

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Jesus heals, drives out demons and preaches – just another day in the life of this Jesus of Nazareth

If we are not careful, we can listen to these Gospel passages, which we've all heard before, at least 15 times just on Sundays if you're as old as I am, and become complacent, even bored.

Show of hands – who has an alarm clock set to go off in the morning? How many usually wake up before the alarm goes off? We become used to the routine.

Every day we get up and go about our business; we get out of bed and get dressed, eat and drink, drive and walk, sit and stand, work and play.

The Oxford Dictionary defines taking something for granted as to, "fail to properly appreciate (something or someone), especially as a result of overfamiliarity."

The opposite of taking something or someone for granted is to appreciate that something or someone.

We start with who is right in front of us, with us always, always trying to get and keep our attention, craving to be with us.

In a few moments, we will see the gifts of bread and wine being offered on the altar. We will hear the words of Consecration and witness Jesus present on this altar. We will come forward to receive, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity the very person we have come to celebrate today, the God of the Universe AND our very brother. In what appears to be still bread and wine, we acknowledge Him – Amen – and we receive Him. We receive Him into our very bodies. We become one with Him – and He becomes one with us.

He never takes us for granted. He always loves us. He always intercedes for us. He only asks that we do the same in return.

And how can we do these things if we are somewhere else with our thoughts. When we take something for granted, we are thinking about something other than what is right in front of us.

What do we take for granted?

Remember that Jesus blesses us constantly.

How are we blessed every day? Every hour? Every minute?

What are you grateful for today?