

Homily
Friday of the Sixth Week of Easter
May 19, 2023

Like you, I have a lot of challenges in my life. And sometimes, those challenges cause me great pain. But every now and then, God gives me the grace to take my eyes off myself to look and listen to my brothers and sisters all around me. At work, I have a few friends who have confided in me about their challenges. Here at St. Paul, some have confided in me about their challenges. Within my family, nearly everyone has shared with me their challenges. Some of these challenges are heart-wrenching, some of them are gut-punching, some of them are nearly criminal in nature. All of these people are struggling with some level of pain. And then I ask God, "is there anyone who can escape the hurt and anguish of this world?"

I can imagine that many, if not all of you, can relate to this. People are in pain. This world is full of situations and sometimes evil that cause hurt and anguish.

The world is also full of joy and happiness, and that is made visible by good people doing good things despite all the chaos around us. We can see the beauty in the world that God created. God created the world Good and then He populated it with people of Free Will who continually make decisions that result in both good and not so good situations. It is up to us, good people of Free Will, to make this world a better place. That is our command from God; that is our directive at the end of Mass, to "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life."

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that we are in anguish, we will weep and mourn, we will grieve. And then He says that our, "grief will become joy." He reminds us that, "you also are now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you." Jesus is telling us that our happiness is in Him. When we focus on Jesus, our pain will go away. This doesn't mean that there won't be challenges; there will. It doesn't mean that evil will go away; it won't. It means that we need to keep our focus on Jesus. In Jesus is our joy. In Jesus we are happy. Even in the midst of chaos and pain, with our eyes on Jesus, we find peace.

And this is especially true for those who meet Him face to face in the eternal banquet in heaven, where there is no more pain.

Jesus, I believe in you. Jesus, I trust in you. Jesus, I love you.