

### Covenant Life

- The coordinators still have a concern regarding in-person Community Gatherings and are requesting that you join us in praying not only for an end of the virus and those affected but also for wisdom and discernment regarding when we should restart our meetings.
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222

**Reflection** - Hopefully, many of you are taking advantage of Fr. Mike Schmitz's podcast "The Bible in a Year". If not, it is never too late to start. If you are, you will recall the January journey through the book of Job. I thought back to the book during the first reading today where Job laments life's drudgery, months of misery, and restless troubled nights. I suspect that this global pandemic has impacted every one of us in significant ways and that we can all identify in some part with Job's troubles.

Job suffers despite his innocence as have most of us and most of the world. But what is important from the book is Job's response. He is faithful and responds with praise. As you and I journey through what has been a year of this pandemic with still much longer to go...we can feel tired, burnt out, so ready for this to all be behind us. But the lesson of Job is relevant to each of us. We too must look beyond our frustration with this pandemic, with our country, with our church or families or whatever else troubles us and turn our full attention, as Job did, to our God and simply praise Him with full and lasting confidence. While the book ends with restoration, Job never gets easy answers to the pain and suffering that he endured. We too many never fully understand our trials but we can look beyond them and faithfully praise God.

The responsorial psalm today supports this message: *"Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted. Praise the LORD, for he is good; sing praise to our God, for he is gracious. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. The LORD sustains the lowly."* These are strong and consistent words to the brokenhearted and lowly that our response is quite simply to Praise the Lord. Our Community

history has proven that the best medicine for whatever ails us is to Praise the Lord!

Reading the Gospel today I was struck by Jesus effectively saying 'No' to His disciples. When pressed to come back to the town because more people were wanting to be healed, Jesus explains that He must instead press on to proclaim the Good News in other places. I have heard and studied presentations on the fact that there were many times in the Gospels where Jesus does not acquiesce to the suggestion to do this or that. I think the key point for us is His example of being so focused on His mission and doing the will of God that He has the conviction to say 'no' to something that sounded 'good'.

I offer this up for further prayer and reflection. How might we each benefit from time away to hear God's plan for our day? Recall in the Gospel (Mark 1:35) what Jesus did first thing in the morning: *"Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed."* Could Jesus' conviction to move from one 'good' to His mission have been based on having spent the morning in prayer? Let us each recommit ourselves to beginning our day in our 'deserted place' to pray and ask our Lord what is His mission for us today. Then, despite the pressures and suffering that we encounter, we too may respond as Job did with praise, faithfulness, and the courage to fulfill whatever God asks of us.

*Let us pray "Heavenly Father, I accept whatever challenges and struggles that I face. I know that You permit these in part to build character and turn my attention toward You. Today I praise You. Today I commit to being faithful to You. Today, I commit to spending quality time with You in prayer. As Job did, I accept whatever Your will for me is. I do all this in order to follow Jesus' example of living for You and accomplishing the mission that You have for me. O Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything! Amen."*

God bless,  
David