



August 14, 2022

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Jer 38:4-6, 8-10 | Heb 12:1-4 | Lk 12:49-53

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

My mom loved her Nintendo 64. We especially enjoyed “Paperboy,” a video game where a paperboy riding a bicycle attempts to deliver newspapers along Easy Street, Middle Road, or Hard Way. He has to avoid obstacles that pop up along the way – barking dogs, mailboxes, skateboarders, trash cans, you name it! Sometimes life can seem that way. We can’t predict which obstacles will pop up, but the author of the Letter to the Hebrews encourages us to persevere, “keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.” Whether we’re riding along “Easy Street” or “Hard Way,” we can look to Jesus to help us overcome the hardships that may come our way because we are his followers. As Jesus tells the disciples, following him will not always be easy and may even result in conflicts within our families. When that happens, we can look to the example of Jesus and the great “cloud of witnesses” to whom the Letter to the Hebrews refers, knowing that peace and reconciliation await us at the finish line.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

I used to have great fun watching my boys at our neighborhood swim meets. Even as my then-7-year-old zig-zagged into the lane lines during the backstroke, I would yell “Go! Go! Go! You’ve got this.” (And, please, someone catch his head at the finish!) He couldn’t hear a word I said. I wonder if it’s a bit like this when it comes to the “cloud of witnesses” – the saints, known and unknown, who encourage us in our faith. We can’t see them or hear them, but we know they are there. In turn, we can become cheerleaders for others running the race alongside us: offering encouragement, prayers, and reminding one another of the joy that awaits us. Spoken or silent, our prayers can help us and others persevere in our faith and place our trust in Jesus when times are tough.

STUDY The *catechism* chapter 3, The Characteristics of Faith (153-165), references this passage from Hebrews on being surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. Read especially #165.