

Second Hand Preacher

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 6, 2016

2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

Retreats have always been important in my life. I go on retreat once a year and I was formed by retreats most of my life. I have primarily worked with youth on retreat, but have helped with retreats for people of all ages. I believe the cement that holds all retreats together is prayer. The time set aside for retreats gives us a real chance to enter fully into the fruit of prayer. Mass, Stations of the Cross, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, praise and worship music, or any kind of prayer prepared or spontaneous give us a chance to express ourselves before God. Prayer is the easiest way to find union with God. In retreat work there has often been a team of people who support the entire retreat with their prayer. They work behind the scenes to help create an atmosphere of prayer so the good work of evangelization can occur.

St. Paul believed in the power of prayer. He slips it into all of his letters. He wants a firm foundation of prayer for all the communities he writes to. This is truly what he wants for the Christians of Thessalonica. Paul is strongly involved in the work of evangelization. Whether he is on the road or in prison he needs prayer. In this letter, he asks this community to pray for him and all his missionaries. They did dangerous work. They took a risk in promoting the love of Jesus to all they encountered. Their goal was to spread Christianity to the modern world. They started in Israel. Spread to all the cities in Greece and even made it to the center of the world in Rome. This task was supported by prayer from all Christians in order for all to share the Good News in some way.

The same is true today. More than ever people are hungry for God in their lives. Even though many declare themselves as “nones,” claiming no affiliation, faith lingers inside them. Many still want to believe there is something greater than them. Some it may be earthly things like money and temporal power, but often these endeavors leave us feeling empty. Like Paul had in his day, we need to form intentional disciples. The first step is to envelope the whole work of evangelization in prayer. To spread the word of God is a risk. People may look at you differently if you dare to share your story. I pray for holy boldness for anyone who is willing to take that risk. Prayer of all the faithful forms the community where Jesus Christ can be known and loved.