

Second Hand Preacher

5th Sunday of Lent

March 13, 2016

Philippians 3:8-14

When I was in junior college, I ran track for one year. I wasn't very good, but the discipline of training with the team and learning from the more experienced runners was good for me. I was a distance runner, but I tried a few other events in order to have a place to compete in bigger meets. One meet I ran the steeple chase. It was a grueling two mile run that you had to jump over hurdles spaced evenly around the track. I was ill prepared for the race. About a mile in, I really struggled with the hurdles and was barely making it over them. One of the assistant coaches wasn't happy with my approach and yelled for me to go around one hurdle so I could be disqualified. I was last by quite a distance, but I finished the agonizing race.

We have a race that is very hard on us. It is the race to be a follower of Christ. St. Paul challenges the Christians in Philippi to run the race well. Jesus is the prize they must focus on. Paul loved the Philippians and tried to encourage them to step up in faith. He longed for them to experience the passion and death of Jesus so they could glory in the resurrection.

As we wind down in Lent, this too is our challenge. Even if we failed on our Lenten disciplines, we have Holy Week to focus on. Use this week to plan for the most Holy Week of the year. Go to confession sometime. There are numerous opportunities both at St. Wenceslaus and in the Western Catholic Community. Check the bulletin and find the one that works for you. Clear out your calendar so you can attend the whole Triduum. Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil are one holy liturgy. The focus is on the passion death and resurrection of our Lord. We do this symbolically and there really isn't much of a struggle, but in Paul's day there was great risk involved to live out their faith. May we live our faith to its fullest so that we can glory in the cross of Christ.