

# Second Hand Preacher

*20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time*

August 14, 2016

**Hebrews 12:1-4**

When I was younger and thinner I used to run. The combination of my weight and my feet make this not as fruitful as it once was. The races that suited me best were ones from 1 to 3 miles. I could focus in that distance. I would push myself in such a way to spend myself in order to finish the race. I would be in a zone and my eyes would be fixed on a goal.

This is how we need to live the Christian life. As the author to the Hebrews said, "...running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus." The author knew that the Hebrews were going to struggle. They were probably living side by side with devout Jews. There were probably Jews opposing the teachings of Jesus right in their same family. When they turned to Christ, they took an incredible risk. Their job, their family, and their very lives were never going to be the same. They knew in the back of their minds they could lose everything; yet they still ran the race. Fortunately, they do not run alone. They have the backing of an entire Christian community. Most importantly that had the possibility of a personal relationship with Jesus. This letter in part is an invitation. The author uses their Jewish roots to bring them closer to following a Jew. This Jew is special; he is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lord. The author wanted to express that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

Jesus is our savior as well. He desires that we run the race. We realize the greatness of the Lord and run the race as if to win. Jesus knew we would struggle. Instead of always fixing our problems, he gave us the cross. We have the opportunity to unite our troubles and sorrows to the Cross of Christ. All of our pains and misgivings are fuel that helps us to continue to run the race. Jesus will always be there for us even to the end of our lives. We are redeemed because of what Jesus did for us. We didn't deserve it, but he gave it to us as a supreme gift. Even though our relationship is personal, we also belong to the larger community. This is the church that Jesus founded for us. Gathering is not seen as optional. Each and every one of our souls is dependent on uniting our hearts together as one within the Holy Mass. This is the way together that we fix our eyes on Christ.