

Second Hand Preacher

6th Sunday of Easter

May 21, 2017

1 Peter 3:15-18

Hope is an amazing virtue. Whether you're on the field of battle, the freeway at rush hour, or trying to match wits with your three year old, hope is what springs eternal. If one enters a struggle with hope, then there is a chance of redemption. It helps the homeless, the unemployed, and the cancer patient alike. Hope is a virtue we can all appreciate.

St. Peter has a rather helpful line, "Always be ready to give a reason for your hope..." This is an important line for those undergoing persecution. The Christians were suffering for a reason. It was not in vain it was for Jesus. This Jesus who died and rose to new life for the salvation of all people gives the early Christians a purpose. Peter helps them realize that even though life will be hard, there is always hope. Even if they are put to death and lose everything in this world, they have hope that there is a life waiting for them in life eternal. Peter wants them to do the right thing even if they suffer rather than doing anything contrary to the will of God. This hope in Christ was to rule their lives.

Do you ever wonder how one would stand up to persecution? What would be our response? Would we have the strength of the Christians who have gone before us? The answers can be found in ones reaction to hope. Our lives might be on the line because of our belief, but we are often faced with suffering in one way or another. Do we face our suffering well or do we curse God every time we face difficulties? I have done both in my life, as I'm sure most people do. Before seminary, I tried to get a good paying job in my field of Food Science. This eluded me and I took jobs that only partially took advantage of my gifts. I was bitter that I couldn't do better. This melancholy pushed me in a totally different direction and I decided to listen to God's call to priesthood. This call also was not always easy, but perseverance makes it all worth it. I have received so many blessings as a priest. Even when my health took a turn for the worse, I knew that God was with me and I tried to never lose hope. I must admit that some days were better than others. All who suffer have hope available to them. The question is, do they embrace that hope? Remember that hope springs eternal.