**Homily** **for the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*Rev. Francis D. Kim*

        Today’s readings tell us about faith. What is the faith?

        I want to share a little story of a missionary couple in an African village. They felt welcome into the small village, but the problem was no one converted to Christianity. Then, their son became seriously ill. The family prayed together and gave all the right medical treatment, but the boy died. After their son’s funeral, surprisingly, the chief of tribe said to the missionaries, “We want to become Christian.” “Why?” the couple asked. “Because we have never seen such faith. Even with the death of your son, you continued to trust your God. We want to know about your God.”

        In today’s Gospel, we hear about the faithful servant. Only the servant who really loves his master will wait eagerly for his master’s return. If we really love someone, we will wait eagerly for one’s return.

        In fact, most of us consider waiting a waste of time. But, waiting is very important in our lives. We are always waiting for something or someone. You know? All the figures appearing from the first pages of Luke’s Gospel are waiting.

        Zechariah and Elizabeth were waiting. The Virgin Mary was waiting. Simeon and Anna, who were there at the Temple when Jesus was brought in, were waiting. The whole opening scene of the Good News is filled with waiting people. They are waiting for something new and good to happen with faith and hope. All these waiting people say, “My soul is waiting for the Lord.”

        In today’s Gospel, the faithful servant is also waiting for his master. When we love someone and when we have faith, then we can wait for. We are always waiting for God. In fact, not only we are waiting for God, but also God is always waiting for each one of us.

        We see the faithful servant in Abraham’s example. God called Abraham to depart from his home town. With total trust, Abraham obeyed. With his wife Sarah, Abraham packed up his tent, bundled up all they owned, left the country of his birth, traveled to the new land of Canaan.

        Abraham walked away from everything. Abandoned his old way of life to live as a stranger in a foreign country. He was seventy-five years old when he left his home. But, Abraham did not say, “Lord, I am too old to depart for new place.” Or did not he say, “Oh, Lord, can it wait until next time? I am not ready to leave.”

        All because God told him to, and Abraham trusted God. That’s Abraham who is a man with complete trust in God. Abraham knew God would fulfill his promise in his life. That’s faith.

        Faith is a journey without maps. Faith is not being sure where we are going but going anyway. Like Abraham did. Because of his unwavering conviction that God does what God promises, we designate Abraham ‘our father in faith.’ As Christians, we are called to the same deep faith.

        Like Abraham, when we accept Christ in our lives through faith, we are called to detach ourselves from our past and from our sinful situation, from which we find difficulty to depart. In fact, we hesitate to migrate from a comfortable life. Our migration is our spiritual journey to the Kingdom of Heaven.

        Faith and love are the great gift from God that we should not only proclaim with our lips, but also profess with our actions.

        In the Gospel, Peter asks, “Who is the faithful and prudent servant?” We ask ourselves the same question: “How do we live our faith today? What does our faith call us to do?”

        Jesus tells us how: “Gird your loins and light your lamps.” With his lamp lighted, the faithful servant was alert, ready for work.

        As Christians, we must always live our faith. Even when difficult. Having faith does not mean that we can sit back and wait for God to solve all of our problems, nor does it mean that we will not suffer. But, it does mean that we will never be alone.

        This week, let us take a few moments to review our personal faith and patience. We will all encounter the Lord when He surely comes to each of us when our earthly life is over. What will that moment be like? Will it be a moment of regret or fulfillment? Will we fear a Judge or welcome friend? That is up to us.

        So, stay awake and be ready! For we do not know on what day the Son of Man will come.