19th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2013

THEME: FAITH DETERMINES OUR FATE

READINGS: Wisdom 18:6-9/ Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-11 / Luke 12:32-48

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

‘Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen’ (Heb. 11:1). It is by faith that we are, for instance, convinced that God exists even though we do not see. Again, it is by faith that we are, for instance, assured of living forever with God in heaven, even though we have not yet seen heaven. Faith, therefore, points to our future spiritual destination; it points to where we hope to be one day – it determines our fate.

Abraham, for instance, was asked by God to move to a place he did not know, but he responded positively by his faith. His faith became like a compass that directed him to the destination he initially did not know. His faith, in a way, determined his destination. Furthermore, by his faith he who was childless had the good fate of becoming the father of many nations.

We have another example of faith determining a people’s fate in the first reading: on that night of the destruction in Egypt, it was the faith in their God that determined the fate of the Israelites. Because of their faith in God they were spared of the deaths of their first born sons, whereas the Egyptians who had no faith in God experienced the bad fate of the deaths of the first born sons.

Beloved, like Abraham and the Israelites in Egypt, it is faith that will determine our fate: the blessings that God has in store for us shall be received if we keep faith with Him. Ultimately, faith is the sure compass that points to our destination in heaven: there are many roads in life leading to different destinations, but only faith can show us the particular road that leads to heaven.

However, as it is enough to see the direction that a compass gives, but it is equally important to walk in that direction, so faith is not a mere assurance or conviction in the mind or heart – it entails action in the direction of God’s grace. In the case of Abraham, his action was the journey he made. In another instance, he was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. For the Israelites in Egypt, their faith-action was to sacrifice the lambs and mark their door-posts with the blood. And in the parables of today’s gospel reading the duties expected of the servants were to keep watch and to manage the household of the master until his return. Similar, our faith should go with good deeds or the faithful performance of our duties.

Beloved, may the compass-pointer of our faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit remain steady forever; amen! And may every good deed we perform in the direction of our faith be a step closer to more blessings; amen! And may all such steps ultimately end in the eternal happy presence of God in heaven; amen!