



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



This is the second homily I have done in two days with the iPad! If I lose this, or I need some help in retrieving my homily, you will help me won't you? Thank God the weather is beautiful and thank God the Rangers won, right?

Let us never forget that the readings which we proclaimed today are not just words on a page, but they are words for us today, and not only words, but the living Word of God who meets each of us and sends us forth to be his living witnesses.

- 1) St. Paul says to the young Bishop Timothy that "I have competed well, I have finished the race; I have kept the Faith! St. Paul may have been writing this letter from a cell in the ground near the Roman Forum in a place called the Mamertime prison, awaiting his execution for being an apostle and following Jesus during the first persecution of the Church. Yet he was indeed free, because he knew the Lord has been faithful to him, and he was able to do all that that he was asked -- he was faithful to the Lord. We have lots of things that can restrict our true freedom in Christ. Do we indeed believe that no matter what the obstacles are in our lives, whatever imprisons us, whatever worries or concerns us, we can finish the race, we can keep the Faith, we can be strong and we can compete well in the lives that God has given us? Do we believe?
- 2) St. Paul grew in his strength because he knew people were praying for him. Do we pray for each other, do we understand that the strength of the Lord also comes from how we are with each other, how we pray for each other, and how we treat each other? And, then, not only does this enable us in the community of the Faith, but we become an example to others, we preach the Gospel with our lives. Do we believe?
- 3) The Gospel also reminds us that when we pray the Lord sees us as we are, and we don't have to pretend, because he knows us and sees us as we are, and calls us forth each day. And, our prayers do reach God and God does hear us. Do we dare to believe that as well? The first reading says that the prayers of the just "pierces the clouds." Look how the prayers of all of you yesterday and today did indeed pierce the clouds of rain and storm yesterday! What a beautiful day God has given us to be together and to pray, and to celebrate our Faith and to be sent forth! And what a beautiful sight all 6,000 of you are today! What must all of the folks in the flights approaching DFW Airport see with all of the colors here in your parish shirts! And indeed what must the Lord behold not only in your colors, but your lives and your prayer today!
- 4) We are sent forth from this day forward to bring the good news of salvation of Jesus Christ, and we are not sent forth by ourselves, but rather sent forth as the family of God, in the community and communion of Church. Just look at all here today, what a difference you can make where you are, because of the strength of Christ, because he does stand by you to give you strength, because you can keep the Faith, and because we are praying together. With the volume of these prayers God cannot help but hear and speak to us, and then indeed we carry that message to wherever we go. Because, we, with the strength of Christ, are indeed -- as important as these are to us -- a sign stronger and more rapid than Twitter, Facebook, and instant messaging!

Compete well -- keep the faith-- finish the race! God bless you always!

+ Bishop Kevin Vann

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