

This morning we meditate upon the Word of God recorded for us in the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 11 to 19. Let us pray. Holy Father, sanctify us through the truth, for your Word is truth. Amen. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In these trying and uncertain days, we need security and stability more than anything. And the only place we can find that right now is in the LORD. Psalm 121 reminds us of that beautiful truth. "I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot stumble. He who watches over you will not slumber. Yes, he who watches over Israel will not slumber. He will not sleep. The LORD watches over you. The LORD is your shade at your right hand. The sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will watch to keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. The LORD will watch over your going and your coming from now to eternity." We can have that confidence only because of the work the Holy Spirit does for us. **Trust in the security of the Holy Spirit because we are God's children and because we are heirs of glory!**

**Trust in the security of the Holy Spirit because we are God's children!** In this life, we can easily be misled into thinking we are disowned by God. We feel like we face nothing but opposition or adversity. We are currently isolated from our family of faith. We worry about how long this will last. We struggle with temptation. The world is largely non-Christian or anti-Christian. We face a harsh reality each day when we crawl out of bed and read the paper, turn on the news or scroll through our social media. The world of COVID-19 is a scary, dangerous place. Where is the security, safety, consistency or routine? We need the security only God can give us as part of his family.

At baptism, the Holy Spirit adopted us into God's family. "And if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his Spirit, who is dwelling in you." At our baptism, the Holy Spirit came to us, creating saving faith in our hearts. He adopted us as children of God. Now Jesus has a throne room inside each of us. The same Holy Spirit who declared Jesus with power to be the Son of God by raising him bodily from the grave has also given us new life in the water of our baptism. Our sins have been crucified with Christ. We are completely forgiven! And we have the victory of Christ's resurrection as our very own too! Thanks be to God! Death is defeated through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That changes us! "Indeed, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you are afraid again, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we call out, "Abba, Father!" The Holy Spirit chases away our fears. He drives out our worry. Uncertainty finds its undoing in the confidence the Holy Spirit gives us. In one of his fireside chats, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt famously said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." He was wrong. The life of Christ is the death of fear. By making that holy life of Christ belong to each of us, the Holy Spirit frees us from the slavery of sin, death, the

devil and the world. We have the true God as our Father and one day we will live in the presence of his Son Jesus in heaven.

Now we live by the Spirit in the newness of life he guarantees to us in Christ. "So then, brothers, we do not owe it to the sinful flesh to live in harmony with it. For if you live in harmony with the sinful flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the actions of the body, you will live." Our new life wants nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness. Each day we can arise and say the baptismal formula while making the sign of the cross on our heart. "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." We are free from the slavery to the sinful nature. The Holy Spirit enables us to fight back against it. We do not belong to sin any longer. We belong to Christ!

Being God's children, belonging to him through the blood of Jesus his Son gives us a great reward. **Trust in the security of the Holy Spirit because we are heirs of glory!**

Now we suffer. "For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us." A global pandemic which leaves us extremely isolated with the economy in ruins seems like a huge and terrible thing. But compared to an eternity in heaven, it is nothing. Cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, pneumonia, persecution, the influenza and so many other things seem so awful. But this is only a tiny fraction of our existence, and the vast majority of our life will be free from all these things and anything else evil FOREVER!

In the Word, the Spirit reminds us of who we are and where we will be. "The Spirit himself joins our spirit in testifying that we are God's children." The Word of God constantly gives us God's never-failing promises of comfort. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God as his instrument in trying times like these to sustain us until things in this world improve, we are in heaven, or Jesus returns. The Bible guides us to Jesus in order to assure us of our forgiveness, salvation and the eternal life awaiting us in paradise. The Holy Spirit leads us to believe all of this is most certainly true.

Through the suffering and death of Christ, our suffering will be changed to everlasting glory. "Now if we are children, we are also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, since we suffer with him, so that we may also be glorified with him." When we suffer, take heart, dear Christian friends. That marks us as children of God. Jesus told us we would have trouble in this life, and right now we feel deeply the impact of those words. But as it was with Christ, so also it is with us. As it was then, so it is now, for there is nothing new under the sun. As it was for those in the days of Christ, so it is now for us. First comes the cross, the pain, the suffering. But then comes the glory, the joy, the peace of heaven. Eagerly await that day, dear friends.

We have the power to do that, even in these uncertain times, through the Holy Spirit. Because of him, we know each of us will personally hear from Jesus, "Come, take your inheritance prepared for you since the creation of the world. Well done, good and faithful servant! Come to

the wedding supper of the Lamb that knows no end.” Trust in the security of the Holy Spirit, and all of this is yours! Amen.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, both soul and body, be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it. Amen.