



June 8, 2020-Reflections for Ordinary Time

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear God, I acknowledge the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation for being the ongoing stewards of this traditional territory.

A reading from the Second Letter of Paul to Timothy

“Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:10-17)

When you read the letters of Paul to Timothy, you realize how honest Paul was about living the faith. He doesn't mince his words as tells Timothy that following Christ is difficult. It will be a life filled with sacrifice and persecution. He tells him that you will not be respected for the most part and those who oppose you will become stronger. It reminds me about the line from *Harry Potter Goblet of Fire* that someone posted on my social feed, it goes “Really Hagrid, if you are holding out for universal popularity, I'm afraid you will be in this cabin for a very long time” (Rowlings). In faith, we who proclaim and serve the Lord is a title which carries both burden and responsibility.

However, Paul reminds Timothy to never lose hope. Remain faithful in prayer and study. If you have moments of doubt read scripture and reread it. Not just for hopeful one liners, but in its entirety to see how Christ's life was not perfect, but whose life fulfilled the promise of scripture. In our modern age, we have a great body of work to help us understand scripture and our relationship to God and others. From the mystic writers like Julian of Norwich and St. Teresa of Avila, to the great theologians such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, to our modern apologists in Bishop Barron, Peter Kreeft, and Scott Hahn. As Paul reminded Timothy, he speaks to us today to not lose hope even when questions and challenges arise about the faith. Instead, he encourages that one continues to pray and study the faith, and remember salvation is in Christ and not the worlds labels.

Let us pray for all the protesters who for the last few weeks have marched in response to George Floyd's death. May this be the time for real attentive awareness and a response which goes beyond words. May it not end with shouts on the streets, but a change of heart and laws in the big and daily choices we make

when we interact with each other again. As well, let us enrich our minds and souls on scripture. May you discover the current and past writers of the faith from our mystics, theologians, and apologists. In them, may you see that in our human struggle, suffering, persecution, and misguided decisions, is an opportunity to grow stronger in our relationship with God and others. As Bishop Barron said early in our COVID-19 isolation, this gift of time in your home with family, is a time to deepen your faith. In light of recent events, to truly take stock of how we live in this world. I pray you take five minutes a day and discover the great writings of our faith to see in them the answers you seek about your purpose in life, in the struggles you face, in how to listen and respond to the cries of injustice. In this way, you can deepen your understanding and practice of the faith you profess. Keep close to your heart the words of Jesus who said, "Remember I am with you always till the end of days." Amen. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.