

Text: Philippians 1:2-11

Theme: Confident Faith

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Epistle lesson of Saint Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, chapter one verses two through eleven.

Boys and Girl, how are you doing this morning? Good! Saint Paul writes in his letter today about being confident in our faith. Confident, what does that word mean? Confidence is Having strong belief or full assurance; sure: confident of fulfillment. Sure of oneself; having no uncertainty about one's own abilities, correctness, successfulness, etc.; self-confident; bold: a confident speaker. (Dictionary.com). Paul says that we are confident in our faith. How can we have confidence until Jesus comes again? Ponder that as we hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Confident in what God has done for you in forgiving your sins

It is hard in this world to have confidence. This is because the world, our sinful flesh, and the devil, all attempt to deceive us. They tell us that what we believe, teach, and confess. What we have faith in, is all a lie. So how can we have confidence?

We can have confidence against the world, our flesh, and the devil, because of whom our faith comes from. Our faith

comes not from ourselves but as a work of God. As Saint Paul writes, “God, who began a good work in you.” God creates and sustains faith in us through His Word, spoken, proclaimed, and attached to the blessed Sacraments. Faith, by its very nature, has something that it holds onto and trusts in. That is why we can have confidence, because of Whom our faith is in. Our faith does not hold to ourselves. We are not the causers of our faith. It does not hold to our own good works or good thoughts and places its trust there. If our faith holds onto ourselves that it is held onto very shaky and unsteady ground.

Rather, faith latches itself onto and holds onto its cause and source. We hold onto what God has done for us. That the Father sends the Son, who lays aside His glory and is born as a baby in Bethlehem. Jesus enters into His creation for us, living a perfect life in our place. Jesus ultimately bears our sins in His holy flesh, taking them to the cross. Bleeding, suffering, and dying, He pays the price for our sins. Rising from the dead, He gives to us the forgiveness of our sins, and life everlasting with Him. This is how we can be confident in what God has done for us in the forgiveness of our sins.

Confident in what God does in us (Fruit production by Christ through work of Holy Spirit to Glory and Praise of God)

Because we have faith in Jesus Christ, He produces fruits of faith within us through His Holy Spirit. His Holy Spirit lives within us, granted in the waters of Holy Baptism. This faith is not merely dormant or silent within us, something that we keep to ourselves. Rather, the faith that we have been given shows

itself in our thoughts, words, deeds, and actions. We use the gifts and talents that God has given to each of us to show the very faith He has granted us. We do not indulge our sinful nature, with its lusts, passions and desires. Rather, we resist them, knowing that we are new creations in Christ. We struggle against our sinful flesh.

We strive to do everything, to the praise and glory of God's holy name in thanksgiving for what He has done for us through Jesus Christ. Because of the Holy Spirit, we are filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. Our whole self, body, mind, soul, and spirit, indeed our whole life thinks speaks, and does what is right. We "approve what is excellent and so be pure and blameless." This means that we hold onto, and speak the truth. We call out sin and urge each other to repentance. We show love to those around us. We mourn with those who mourn. We encourage and support each other in the faith when we go through difficult times and persecution. We support one another to hold onto the faith, knowing that just as our Lord suffered, so too do we.

Confident He will keep us until Christ's return

We have confidence that no matter the trials we may face upon the earth, God will keep His promises. He has promised that He will keep us steadfast in the faith, until our Lord's return in glory. As Saint Paul writes, "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." God has begun this good work in us, creating, and sustaining faith in us, and He will see it through.

Dear Christian, as you go through this life, be confident. Not in yourselves or in your own actions, but in the actions of Your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He who has died, rose, and ascended to the very heights of heaven for you, will keep you steadfast in the faith, until He returns in glory.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.