

# FIFTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME.

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The gospel reading for today is presented as a contrast to the first reading. If you have read the book of Job you know that it is a long book indeed, it has 42 chapters. The first two chapters of the book and the last ten verses of chapter 42 are the framework most people are acquainted with when we think about Job. This is where we hear about Job being a just man who is beset by all sorts of horrible suffering. He says the " Lord gives and the Lord

takes away" blessed be the name of the Lord. At the end of the book God rewards Job for his faith and total trust in him.

The obvious message the author of Job was stressing was Faith and Trust in God no matter what may come our way.

During his entire ministry our Lord taught that same message over and over.

In the Gospel for today Jesus heals Simon's mother in law of a fever. He heals people with all sorts of illnesses including possession and psychological or psychiatric illnesses. Jesus heals so many people that he has to find a solitary place in the desert for special moments of union with his Father.

The special moments with our God is really the essence of this Gospel. If we were to read on past Mark 30 to 34 to Mark 53 to 56 we find that Jesus calls his disciples to go to a desert place for those special moments with their heavenly Father. In fact, that term "desert place" is mentioned three times in just a few verses.

The Bible often refers to wildernesses and deserts. Hagar, Moses and Elijah go to the wilderness and find God. John the Baptist went into the wilderness to preach and crowds followed him there. When Jesus was tempted he had gone into the wilderness for 40 days. Clearly the lesson we learn is that each one of us need a place of solitude , our own little hiding place so to speak. Not so much from the cruelty that Job experienced, but from the busyness of the world-- a place of rest where distractions are minimized, so we can fix our focus on the larger picture through reflection and prayer, a spiritual break for the soul, that place that belongs just to you and your God.

An anonymous author wrote this poem about taking time for God:

Take time to think, it is the source of power. Take time to read, it is the fountain of wisdom. Take time to play, it is the secret of staying young. Take time to be quiet, it is the opportunity to seek God. Take time to be aware, it is the opportunity to help others. Take time to love and be loved, it is God's greatest gift. Take time to laugh, it is the music of the soul. Take time to be friendly, it is the road to happiness. Take time to dream, it is what the future is made of. Take time to pray, it is the greatest power on earth.

The question is what are we doing to nurture our spiritual life and if the answer is nothing-- Then it's time to find your special place of solitude that special place to pray.

Speaking of prayer a young girl who was about to make her first Communion asked Father O'Brien why we always say "amen" at the end of a prayer instead of "a woman" ? The good Father was quick to respond with I believe it is because we sing "hymns" instead of "hers".