

Ordinary 27C - 2025

All the fresh water you could ever need:

A man was lost in the desert and was near death for lack of water. Soon he came across a pump with a bucket hung on the handle and a note. The note read as follows: *"Below, you will find all the fresh water you could ever need, and the bucket contains exactly enough water to fill the pump to start it working."* - It takes GREAT FAITH to pour out the whole content of the bucket for a promise of unlimited water. What would we do? Jesus demands such a Faith. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

Blame-game without trusting in God:

There is a humorous story of an updated piece of advice to a new pastor. On his very first day in office, this new pastor got a call from his predecessor. He congratulated him on his new charge and told him that in the center drawer of the desk in the office he had left three envelopes, each numbered, which he was to open in order when he got into trouble. After a short-lived honeymoon with the congregation, the heat began to rise and the pastor decided to open the first envelope. The note inside read, *"If it will help, blame me for the problem. After all, I am gone and have new problems of my own."* That worked for a while, but then things went bad again. The pastor opened the second envelope, which read, *"Blame the congregation. They have a lot of other interests. They can take it."* That worked for a while, but then the storm clouds gathered again, and in desperation the pastor went to the drawer and opened the third envelope. The message read, *"Prepare three envelopes!"* (Harold Buetow in *God Still Speaks: Listen!* (Quoted by Fr. Botelho).

From a young priest who works with university students as a chaplain.

They have a zest for life and an energy and color that I can only envy. But inside of all this zest and energy, I notice that they lack hope because they don't have a meta-narrative. They don't have a big story, a big vision that can give them perspective beyond the ups and downs of their everyday lives. When their health, relationships, and lives are going well, they feel happy and full of hope; but the reverse is also true. When things aren't going well the bottom falls out of their world. They don't have anything to give them a vision beyond the present moment.

In essence, what he is describing might be called "the peace that this world can give us." In his farewell discourse, Jesus contrasts two kinds of peace: one that he leaves us and one that the world can give us. What is the difference?

The peace that the world can give to us is not a negative or a bad peace. It is real and it is good, but it is fragile and inadequate. It is fragile because it can easily be taken away from

us. Peace, as we experience it ordinarily in our lives, is generally predicated on feeling healthy, loved, and secure. But all of these are fragile. They can change radically with one visit to the doctor, with an unexpected dizzy spell, with sudden chest pains, with the loss of a job, with the rupture of a relationship, with the suicide of a loved one, or with multiple kinds of betrayal that can blindsides us. We try mightily to take measures to guarantee health, security, and the trustworthiness of our relationships, but we live with a lot of anxiety, knowing these are always fragile. We live inside an anxious peace.

What Jesus offers is a peace that is not fragile, that is already beyond fear and anxiety, that does not depend upon feeling healthy, secure, and loved in this world. What is this peace? At the last supper, and as he was dying, Jesus offered us his gift of peace. And what is this? It is the absolute assurance that we are connected to the source of life in such a way that nothing, absolutely nothing, can ever sever—not bad health, not betrayal by someone, indeed, not even our own sin. We are unconditionally loved and held by the source of life itself and nothing can change that. Nothing can change God's unconditional love for us. (Fr. Ron Rolheiser)

"Mr. Jeremy Bentham, present but not voting."

There are people with lots of Faith who still contribute very little to God's kingdom. They are like a man Ernest Fitzgerald tells about in his book, *Keeping Pace*. The man was a wealthy English philanthropist named Jeremy Bentham. In his will, Mr. Bentham bequeathed a fortune to a London hospital on whose Board of Directors he had sat for decades. There was, though, one peculiar stipulation. Mr. Bentham's will read that in order for the hospital to keep the money, he, Jeremy Bentham, had to be present at every board meeting. So, for over 100 years the remains of Jeremy Bentham were brought to the board room every month and placed at the head of the table. And for over 100 years in each secretary's minutes was a line that read: "Mr. Jeremy Bentham, present but not voting."

Two-thirds of the world and 50 percent of all Church members will not even roll out of bed on Sunday morning. They don't need more Faith. They just need to roll out of bed. [Michael B. Brown, *Be All That You Can Be* (Lima, Ohio: CSS Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), pp. 55-56].

Little child's Faith in action:

"Once all the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is faith." — Short little message, but it gives to thinking about how each of us have faith in the power of prayer in particular.