

Homily for the 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A
St. Francis of Assisi Parish – Belchertown
February 25-26, 2017

Rabbi David Wolpe wrote a story about his grandfather, who died when his father was only 11 years old. The boy, an only child, experienced much of the grief alone. Following Jewish tradition, he walked to the synagogue every morning for a full year to pray for his father.

Early on, the boy noticed Mr. Einstein, an elderly man from the synagogue, walking past his home just as he left to go pray. The man said to him, “Your home is on the way to the synagogue. I thought it might be fun to have some company. That way I won’t have to walk alone.”

For the next year, the little boy and the old man walked to the synagogue together, through all kinds of weather. They talked about life and loss, sorrow and fear. The boy felt less alone.

Several years later, the boy (then a man) contacted Mr. Einstein (by then in his 90s) and asked if he could visit. Mr. Einstein was delighted and gave him directions.

He had never been to Mr. Einstein’s home and when he saw that the journey took 20 minutes by car, he realized that Mr. Einstein had walked for an hour to the boy’s home each morning so that the boy would not have to be alone. He was moved to tears when he realized the sacrifice the old man made for him.

That story is the story of all of us making this often difficult journey through life. But it’s a journey that we never have to make alone because God is always walking with us just as the old man walked with the little boy.

In all the moments of our lives – the good and the bad – God is beside us. So, in our Gospel today, Jesus reminds us not to have undue worry, to take one day at a time, even one moment at a time, and God, who knows our needs, will care for us.

A popular expression says: “Let go and let God.” But if we let go, then what exactly do we let God do?

Well, we let God be God: our Creator, Father, Inspiration, and Guide. We let God challenge us and ask us to be stronger than we realized we could be. We let God take us where we may not want to go. We cooperate with God’s grace and gifts and let God make us what we were meant to be.

God knows what we are capable of – but do we understand what God is capable of? God feeds the birds and clothes the flowers; God parted the Red Sea, gave sight to the blind, and raised His only Son from the dead.

So we need to let God work miracles in our lives by letting Him into our daily lives. We need to let God love us, comfort us, and help us carry our burdens.

Psalm 62 says, “Rest in God alone, my soul,” or as St. Augustine once prayed: “Our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”

Our restless hearts will only find their rest by trusting in God’s love and mercy, by turning to Him in our fear, and having faith that our ultimate future, with our use of God’s gifts and reliance on God’s power, really is in His hands. ☩