

Youth Pilgrimage 2015

Introduction

I have a confession to make: I have a terrible sense of direction. Once, when I was in Rome, I decided to run a few errands and while I was at it I'd visit a few beautiful old churches I had wanted to see. Even though I had been in Rome many times, I got lost. I was turned around and confused. After a while, I did what any sensible person would do: I got a cappuccino, then I hailed a taxi which safely brought me back to the place where I was staying. Once I returned, I told a fellow priest what had happened. After he got through laughing, he said, "You'd better not walk alone."

Walking with Jesus

That priest gave me good advice; and that's the advice I'm giving you. It's not that I think you'll get lost on the streets of Baltimore. What I'm really talking about is this: you shouldn't walk by yourself as you make the journey through life. Lots of people try to do just that and many get lost.

It's possible to walk alone even when there are people everywhere. One of the loneliest places in the world is a busy city street full of strangers. People are hurrying to appointments or looking at their I-phones. Many are self-absorbed and indifferent to everyone else. When we think only of ourselves, we shut everyone else out, the Lord included. That's when we get lose our way. We start telling ourselves lies. Our relationships with others deteriorate. We can easily fall into all kinds of self-destructive behaviors. We can fall into sin.

To walk in truth we need to walk with Lord and with fellow disciples. Pope Francis summed up the central message of the Gospel this way: "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen, and free you." We are here this morning for Eucharistic adoration, to

praise, to thank, and to adore the Lord Jesus Christ, truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

As we look upon the Lord present with us in such a deep, personal, and real way, we ask to deepen our attachment, our friendship with him, so that we many never walk alone, so that we know that the Lord is by our side whether we are at home, at school, engaged in sports, taking a test, or trying to solve a problem, facing a temptation, grieving a loss, or trying to find out what we should do with rest of our lives. The Lord doesn't want us walking alone. He doesn't want us to get lost. He wants to walk with us.

There's something else. Walking with Jesus means walking with one another. That's why Jesus gave us the Church. He knew we'd never be his followers all by ourselves. He knew we'd lose our way. Pope Francis reminds us we can't love Christ without loving the Church. So in spending these few minutes in adoration, we deepen our friendship with Christ and our commitment to the Church. We ask the Lord to show us our vocation in the Church, whether priesthood, religious life, or the call to marriage and family.

Conclusion

So let us walk in truth and love. Let us adore Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. God bless you and keep you in his love.