

JUNE 25, 2017



TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



JEREMIAH 20:10-13

PSALM 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35

ROMANS 5:12-15

MATTHEW 10:26-33

REFLECTION

I was waiting at the hospital when my sister-in-law was in labor and I'll never forget how my brother burst through the doors shouting, "Leah had a baby boy!" I had never seen my brother so proud and excited! It's with this same sort of enthusiasm that we are to share the Gospel. To evangelize, or, to spread the Gospel, literally means to proclaim the Good News of Jesus from the housetops so all can hear. In today's Gospel, Jesus encourages the Apostles to "speak in the light" and to not be afraid. At the time when this Gospel passage was written, many Christians were being persecuted and killed for their beliefs, and some had started to lose heart. Matthew is addressing the very real (life and death) fears of these Christians who had begun to experience the risky consequences of following Jesus. Matthew is trying to communicate that although following Jesus might not always be the popular thing to do, we should nevertheless be bold in speaking the truth. Three times in this short passage he says, "Do not fear!" (see verses 26, 28, and 31)—when we live our lives in faithfulness to Jesus, we don't have to be afraid.

ACTION

Let's look to the words of Pope Francis for some encouraging advice for spreading the Gospel with joy: "An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral! Let us recover and deepen our enthusiasm . . . [may our lives] glow with fervor" (*Evangeliu gaudium*, 10).

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

● Describe a time when you were reluctant to say what you were really thinking. In contrast, have you ever had such good news to share that you could hardly contain yourself?