

HOMILY 5TH SUNDAY EASTER May 10, 2020

Like Father, like son. Like Mother, like daughter. The apple does not fall far from the tree. We have a number of these sayings that say something very similar. Children tend to closely resemble their parents. Some of this has to do with the fact that we may share DNA, but I think it goes much deeper than that. Today is Mother's day and I have been thinking about my Mother this week and all of the many things that she taught me over the years. My Mother went home to the Lord 19 years ago, but she is still with me. As I get older, I realize how much I am like my Mother. She taught me most of what I need to know about finance: "If you do not have the money, do not buy it." That is the way I have always handled my personal finances and that is how I handle the Parish finances. I always knew that my Mother loved me unconditionally. I learned more about the unconditional love of God from my Mother than I learned in 6 years in the seminary. My Mother also taught me how to be resilient. My Father died at 45 years of age and my Mother was 43 years of age at the time. They had a traditional marriage. My Father was the bread winner and my Mother stayed home and took care of the home and the kids. At 43, that all changed. Her life became something that she had not bargained for. She had to take care of 4 children by herself now. My older sister was away at college and my younger sister was 3 years old. My parents did not have a lot of money, so she had to figure out how she was going to take care of us. People told her that she should get married again so she could have help raising us children. She said: "I had a really good marriage and now that part of my life is over. I have to start a new life," We grieved the loss of my Father, but we did not get stuck there. I learned at 15 year of age that bad things happen to good people and that our lives can change overnight. But many good things came from this. My new role in the family was to take care of my little sister so Mom could go back to work. I always had a special relationship with my little sister and

that continues today. And I learned how to be resilient, and that was an important lesson. We would all like to live comfortable happy lives, but that is not what life is like in this world. We can hold things together for a while, but they soon fall apart again. We continue to have our Good Fridays, but they are always followed by the Resurrection, by new life if we cooperate with God.

In the Gospel reading today Jesus is telling us, like father like son. If you know me you also know my Father. I am in the Father and the Father is in me. I am the way to the Father. I am the way, the truth and the life. Look, just follow me and learn from me. Follow me like a young child follows their parents. That is what we do when we are young children. As we get older we start to rebel a little, but all we need to do to get to heaven is to follow Jesus and learn from him. He works in our lives that same way he worked 2,000 years ago in the disciples' lives. He taught them how to do what he was doing. What Jesus did for a very small group of people we can do for millions of people. And Jesus was resilient. During his public ministry his life was not comfortable and happy. Things kept falling apart and then he would pull them back together again. And Jesus had the big Good Friday and also the big Resurrection, the new life.

The life I had a couple of months ago was pretty comfortable and happy. But then it all fell apart with the coronavirus. I can complain about it or try and place blame, or I can be resilient that way my Mother taught me to be resilient, the way Jesus taught me to be resilient. Jesus is not going to solve all of this for us, but he is going to teach us how we can find our new normal. We need to follow him like a child follows their parents. Like Father like sons and daughters. That is what he did 2,000 years ago. That is what he will do today.