

## **HOMILY 27<sup>TH</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time**

### **October 5, 2025**

I have a quote I would like to share with you today. “And I have seen the Promised Land. And I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land. So I’m happy tonight. I’m not worried about anything. I’m not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. I have a dream this afternoon that the brotherhood of man will become a reality. With this faith, I will go out and carve a tunnel of hope from a mountain of despair...With this faith, we will be able to achieve this new day, when all of God’s children – black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics – will be able to join hands and sing with the Negroes in the spiritual of old, ‘Free at last! Free at Last!...Thank God almighty we are free at last.’” Now do you know who this quote is from? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the leader of one of the important spiritual social movements of our time. I have been sitting with this quote all week. Dr. Martin Luther King was able to lead this movement because he saw the Promised Land. He could do this because he could see beyond what is to what can be. He was able to do this because he had faith, and he was able to lead people of faith to something better.

In the Gospel reading today the apostles want Jesus to increase their faith. Jesus tells them that if they have faith the size of a mustard seed, they could say to the mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea and it would obey. In other words, we can do extraordinary things with the faith we have. I think in a time of confusion, hatred, divisions and violence, we need to begin to see past the present to see the Promised Land, to see not just what is, but what can be. We need to sustain a positive attitude. Our faith tells us that the world is good because it was created by God who is all good and loves us unconditionally. He sustains our world and each one of us every day. Our faith tells us that we were all created in the image and likeness of God and therefore all people are basically good. And that is my experience with the people I come into contact with every day. I see people each day who are sometimes struggling but

they are basically good people doing the best they can. The people where I cannot see their goodness are people I do not know personally. My guess is that if I could get to know them I could find the goodness. We need to remember this to nurture our faith, so we can see what can be. The primary thing that makes us human is our free will. God allows us to exercise our free will and that sometimes gets us off track. But God can work through our human nature if we let him. When we can find the goodness in someone else it brings out the goodness in us. Think about it. When someone believes in your goodness, you can believe in your own goodness.

There are a number of blocks to our faith, and we have to make sure we are not contributing to them. There are four of these blocks that I want to talk about today. One is creating divisions, finding groups of people that do not belong. Everyone belongs in the Promised Land. It is not us and them, it is only us. The second is judging and blaming individuals or groups of people and labeling them as bad. What they do at times is bad but that does not make them bad people. If we see people or groups as bad, this promotes hatred. Remember people are basically good. There is no place for hatred in the Promised Land. The third is fear, taking extreme positions and doing things to instill fear in others. Fear is immobilizing and gets us stuck and overwhelmed by what is and prevents us from seeing what can be. Fear is never of God. There is no place for fear in the Promised Land. The fourth is isolating from other people. Becoming cynical about others. Picking your tribe and never venturing outside that group. Never making any attempt to understand the viewpoints of others. We need to discover that we are all God's children, we are all brothers and sister in the Promised Land.

So do you have faith? Is your faith blocked by creating divisions, by labeling others or groups as bad, by creating fear or by isolating from others? Can you get beyond what is today to see what can be? Can you see the Promised Land?