
29 Saturday

SATURDAY, 3rd Week Ordinary Time

Hebrews 11: 1-2, 8 - 19

(Resp.) Luke 1: 69 -75

Mark 4: 35 - 41

A beautiful phrase in one of the Eucharistic liturgies refers to Abraham as “our father in faith”. Today’s first reading is the origin of that phrase, all about Abraham’s faith and the faith of those with him. It shows Abraham as the perfect model of complete trust in God, believing against all the odds that what God said or promised would indeed come to happen.

We use the word ‘faith’ to describe the things we believe in, the teachings and doctrines we hold. What we take to be truths of life (about anything, including our own selves) are important for us, because they are the values we cherish and live by. Clearly, as intelligent human beings we should be able to explain these beliefs, and understand them (to the best of our ability). We should know how to speak about what we believe and why, The “content” of our faith, what we profess when we recite the Creed, is something very important, needing to be nurtured.

But in the bible, and today’s first reading, ‘faith’ has another, more fundamental, meaning. Abraham didn’t know so very much about God when he nevertheless put his life in trust to Him. Abraham’s faith was a radical trust, that God would do as He said and give as He promised. It was a huge risk, leaving Abraham nothing else to rely on, even when God told him to do something that seemed to make a nonsense of His promise. Yet Abraham still trusted God.

Let his hope and faith inspire us to accept the same risk. And what we’ll receive will itself be God’s gift and a power/virtue beyond our understanding: our faith.