Faith and endurance...

Reflections on the readings for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time (October 13, 2019): 2 KGS 5:14-17; PS 96:1,2-3,3-4; 2 TM 2:8-13; LK 17:11-19

Today's liturgical readings emphasize the need for us to thank God for His great blessings. Obviously, Naaman in the Second Book of Kings and the Samaritan in the Gospel according to Luke have much for which to be grateful. They were lepers and were miraculously cured through the mercy of God. They both not only praised our Lord, but also believed in Him. Naaman promised to serve only the God of Israel and the Samaritan fell at the feet of Jesus, glorifying God. Through their faith, the two found far more than healing of their bodies. They found salvation for their souls.

In Paul's Second Letter to Timothy, we hear him refer to the Gospel of Christ’s Resurrection that means everything to him. This is true both for his own sake and for the sake of those who have come to believe through his efforts. “Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy: If we have died with Him we shall also live with Him; if we persevere we shall also reign with Him” (2 Timothy 2:10-12). True faith demands perseverance, and not only when we feel appreciative, or joyful, or at peace. When sharing the Good News is hard and our lives difficult, we must still be faithful. When we suffer uncertainty or hardship, when those around us mock us or cause us trouble because of our fidelity to Christ, He still asks us to remain loyal. Our Redeemer was faithful to His Father and to His mission. He gave up His life to save our souls. Surely, He can expect us to respond with the same confidence and trust. The Son of God died for love of His people. Now we must live for love of Him.

Suggested missionary action:  We need to persevere each day in being faithful Catholics and followers of Christ. Through our prayer and the example of what we say and do, we show the depth of our belief in our Savior. In this Extraordinary Missionary Month, may we encourage others to draw ever closer to Him, and offer our prayers and support for missionaries who do the same half a world away.

For more about the Extraordinary Missionary Month and related resources, visit this website. For resources for the celebration of World Mission Sunday, visit this website.