

2 Cor 11: 18, 21-30

Ps 34: 2-7

Matt 6: 19-23

As much as suffering is part of our own lives, it is a part that we tend to push away, trying to avoid at all costs, simply because it is too painful and we become weak in the face of suffering. We take all measures possible to keep our weaknesses hidden as they expose our vulnerabilities. St. Paul, on the contrary, boasts about his sufferings and weaknesses in the first reading today and the list seems endless. It is difficult to imagine how St. Paul could speak of all negativities he had to go through with such pride. This very act makes me wonder about things that could have enabled him to give such a brave response. It is never mentioned that St. Paul fought his persecutors with weapons, instead his endurance, courage and strength seemed to come from an invisible source. Listening to Jesus in today's gospel, it makes me realise that St. Paul is drawing from the treasures he had stored up in heaven.

It is a great opportunity for each one of us to examine where we have stored up our riches, for there will be days we must draw from our stores to keep on going. In our human capacities, we try to save up enough possessions for the future and the more we have in our savings, the better we feel. But the reality is that all our needs cannot be met with mere physical possessions we pile up on earth. In the face of a terminal illness, betrayal of a spouse or a friend, a financial crisis, loss of a job or a loss of a loved one, all the wealth in the world would come to mean nothing. We would need something beyond physical possessions to help sustain us through these trials in life and these are the kinds of treasure we are called to gather, that no one could snatch away from us. In a special way, let us open ourselves to the leading of the Spirit throughout this day, allowing Him to show us the kind of treasure that endures, that gives us strength to carry on through crisis, that enables us to rejoice in the face of suffering, that fills us with courage to stand firm through uncertain situations and allows us to reach out to others at the same time.

Prayer: Abba Father, Grant that we may always gather up treasure in heaven so that our hearts will always be where You are. Amen!