

It is a beautiful day in the park, and a young father is pushing his screaming child in a stroller. As the father wheels his infant son along the path, he keeps murmuring, “easy now, Ronnie, just keep calm, Ronnie. It’s all right Ronnie, just relax - it’s going to be all right Ronnie”. A woman passes by and says to the young father, “you certainly know how to talk to an upset child – quietly and gently”. The woman then leans over the stroller and says: “what seems to be the trouble, Ronnie” and the father says, “Oh no, he’s Bobby. I’m Ronnie”.

People of faith are not easily rattled. Even in the times of difficulty and struggles they are not phased. Those with a gloomier outlook on life seem to be guided by Murphy's Law: whatever can go wrong will go wrong. Our happiness or unhappiness in life will often depend on how we perceive things. Some people have a jaded view of things that don't often align with reality. The apostles in today's Gospel seem very frightened even though Jesus was with them in the boat, granted, he was asleep, but he was still with them. They said to Him “don’t you care, we are going down.” You see, sometimes we lash out at people when fear and insecurities take over. However, our friends, and especially those of faith, often rightly remind us that maybe things aren't quite as bad as we are making them out to be and that if we put them in perspective, things could likely be worse. When a person's faith in God is on the wane, it creates a perfect condition for insecurities, whether real or imaginary, to rush in. Fear, of course, is the opposite of faith. Jesus said to the apostles; “why are you so frightened, where is your faith?” But it's not just apprehension in the face of immediate physical dangers. Some fears originate from awful experiences we have had in the past. Things like that can truly cast a shadow over our lives and shape us to default to fear rather than faith.

But we see in the gospel that just as the Lord rebuked the wind and the sea, he can do the same for us and our fears and concerns. God, our father, does not want our freedom be curtailed by fear. He wants us to have faith in Him and not let our hearts be troubled or afraid. With the struggles we've had over the past year and struggles that are likely to come in our future, we must know that our love and faith in God will see us through, that there is nothing that we can't handle with God our father on our side.

I hope and pray that our heavenly father isn't the only father of faith that we can count on when we are going through struggles. This weekend is father's day and this gospel reading certainly reminds us the importance of fathers of faith that we

can count on. Fathers often sacrifice in ways that aren't seen, they often carry their burdens and their pride internally. Generally speaking, fathers tend not to be over emotional and regularly keep their emotions and thoughts, good and bad, to themselves. So speaking as a father, I am going to give you a few insights about how we work and why we act the way we do. And I'm even willing to bet that St. Joseph had similar situations with our mother Mary and his step-son Jesus. So, for example, when we say that it would take too long to explain, it means that we have no idea how it works. When we say "sure honey" or "yes, dear" it means absolutely nothing – it's a conditioned response. When we say that we're not lost, we know exactly where we are it means that we don't know where we are and its possible that no one will ever see us alive again. And when we say "honey, what color is this?" it means that ALL men see in only 16 colors, like Windows default settings. Peach, for example, is a fruit, not a color. Pumpkin is also a fruit. We have no idea what "taupe" is.

But when you tell us that you love us and we respond with "you too" or possibly nothing at all, know that just like our heavenly father, we love you with all of our hearts. Know that when it seems like we don't care or that we aren't paying attention, like the apostles felt about Jesus in our gospel reading, we can tell you about every important time and moment in your life because you mean that much to us. And know that, just like our heavenly father, if you ever need us, we will be there for you.

So let's take time today to thank God our father for his guidance and protection, even during times we didn't recognize it. Let's take time today to thank God for the sacrifice of his son and recognize the suffering he went through for that sacrifice was because of his love for us. But let's also take the time to thank fathers of faith out there, because they show us a love that often goes unnoticed but should never be forgotten...THANKS GUYS!