



Jubilee Homily

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Who of us doesn't worry? What to wear, what to eat, what to do....

I have to confess that I fretted a bit about a "jubilee dress" and shoes! My friends came to my rescue and voila...

Really, worrying does not end in happiness, but turns our body into hyperactive, acid spewing, hypertensive, and neurotic machines--- hardly the spiritual, God-like servants we have promised to be.

We could all tell stories of when we worried too much. I tried to cover my anxiety when I moved from Kansas to Ohio to take on the charge of leadership of our new Congregation. I didn't know what to do or how to be. When I first moved, I didn't sleep for three nights just because of anxiety. Worrying didn't help, but it took time to let it go and enter each day regardless of how awkward I felt or the mistakes I made. I longed for normal and it didn't exist. I came to see that others felt similar uneasiness. We make the path forward together by walking it. In our shared vulnerability we forged a new congregation, for which I am deeply grateful.

Jesus gives us such delightful examples in nature of God's fatherly providence. Birds and flowers arrayed more beautifully than Meagan and Harry, the Royals... yet here we are, much more precious. God knows what we need, watches over us, and cares so tenderly...

As I look on each of the Jubilarians and on my own life, we are women of faith, not depending only on our own efforts to teach, to nurse, to form young Sisters, to be missionaries. So many days, it was our Providential God that saved us from stumbling and bumbling. We brought our young and idealistic spirits to Dominican life and never turned back in this God quest. After 50, 60, 70 years we (all of us) can be overwhelmed by God's loving care. God gives us all that is necessary so we can put our trust in God as we face the future of health concerns, transitions, letting go, and surrender. Before his death, Robert Kennedy quoted the Greek Philosopher, Aeschylus :

He who learns must suffer, and, even in our sleep, pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God.

We celebrate today this depth of wisdom - not one that worries about fluff, but wisdom born of desire and pain and Oneness of Heart. We have risked taking God at Her word, with an attitude of discipleship, and it has made all the difference with our feet on the ground, within our daily duties, encountering countless folks.

Sufficient for each day is its own trouble – let's not increase the trouble by adding anxiety. We all have good excuses to worry – a scary diagnosis, a cranky Sister, a big problem without an answer, or for me a traffic jam. We don't have to chew Maalox, or go on a shopping binge, or eat a bag of Oreos.

We have the Word, a connection with Jesus, an embrace of the Beloved whispering, "Come to Me." Praying in silence clears the muddy waters. We can admit our failures, forgive others their failures and grow into soul companions.

Thomas Moore writes that healthy aging is accepting ourselves just as we are, not worrying that we have to be good at everything. Eventually we come around to set the right priorities- not measured in money, success, popularity or power, but celebrated in community, given in ministry, and lived in faith. Today we give thanks for the gifts and for the limits that make us who we are – precious and beloved. The evidence is in how God cares for us!

We actually relish living in insecurity - that's the Truth of life. We have only today and no promise of tomorrow. We are vagabonds in the grace of Christ- with not a care in the world, confident in our Providential God.