

- Good morning everyone. A happy Veterans' Day to all of you veterans out there; thank you for your service to us and to our nation as a whole. Remember especially those still deployed and out "on the line" today, and those who have given their lives in our service.
- And a special "happy birthday" to all of my fellow Marine veterans out there today. Today (10 November) is the 238th anniversary of the establishment of the USMC by the Continental Congress in 1775.
- I was tempted to have the Marine Corps Hymn for the entrance procession, but by tradition I would have had to stand at attention the whole time. Kind of delays the beginning of Mass.
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- In the Gospel today Jesus says something that seems harsh: *"The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage."*
- Now Jesus' intent isn't in giving an exposition on marriage so much as affirming the reality of the resurrection and telling his audience: Don't limit your vision to his short earthly life; set your eyes on eternal life...for this life is gone in a breath, but eternal life (or eternal death) is as certain as God's Word...more certain than the existence of the heavens and the earth.
- But you say: "We are not given in marriage in Heaven? What about my beloved spouse?" Others might say: "Thanks be to God!"
- You need not worry about that. If you are both in Heaven, you will love your spouse even more. So make sure he/she makes it there!
- But...you will love ALL souls in Heaven far more than you ever loved anyone on earth...for there will be no hindrance to love by jealousy, rivalry, fear of either disappointed hopes or fear of being used rather than loved. All such emotional baggage and uncertainty will be eliminated.

- But most of all...the souls in Heaven will love each other so much simply because each one there will have loved God.
- That is why we never must get too downhearted with, or dependent upon, things of this earth...even upon spouse and family.
- For our true happiness awaits in Heaven, and assisted by the graces given in the sacraments, and especially in the Eucharist, we **WILL** come to know that eternal happiness if we remain faithful to our Father and to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

- This happiness was uppermost in the minds of the other and sons in our first reading from 2 Maccabees 7.
- It is one of my absolute favorite biblical stories—one so inspirational that medieval warrior monks would read it often for inspiration before battle.
- Because...what an example of courage and steadfastness in the face of evil and challenge.
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- The evil king demands that the Jews give up their faith...but they refuse.
- A mother willingly gives up her seven sons, and then herself, to torture and death rather than to see them break the law of God and betray Him.
- The sons follow their mother's courage and faithfulness (good boys that they are): *“We are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors.”*
- When they refuse to follow the Gentile king's orders: *“The king fell into a rage, and gave orders that pans and caldrons be heated...and he commanded that the tongue of their spokesman be cut out and that they scalp him and cut off his hands and feet, while the rest of the brothers and the mother looked on.”*
- When the young man was utterly helpless, the king ordered him to be taken to the fire, still breathing, and to fry him in a pan....but even in the face of such horrors, the brothers and their mother still

encouraged one another to die courageously rather than betray God's law.

- One after another, the brothers were brought forth and presented a choice: either break God's law and live, or to stay faithful to God and die torturous deaths—hands, feet, and tongues cut off.
- They despise the evil king, each in his turn, saying things like:
 - *"You accursed wretch...the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws."*
 - One brother *"...put out his tongue and courageously stretched forth his hands, and said nobly, 'I got these from Heaven, and because of his laws I disdain them, and from him I hope to get them back again...'"*
- Likewise the fourth, the fifth, the sixth and the seventh sons.
 - Meanwhile, the courageous mother: *"...encouraged each of them in the language of their fathers...and said to them: 'I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath...Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the beginning of man and devised the origin of all things, will in His mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws.'"*
- They saw past the end of this brief earthly life and forward to eternal life.
- Such an inspiring drama—to stand strong in spite of even impossible odds...determined to do what is right at all costs.
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- When I read this, I am forced to reflect: What will I do when faced with challenge in my faith?
- It is doubtful that I would have to endure the trials of that mother and her sons; will I have to courage to stand for my convictions... to stand with God?

- Well...“forewarned is forearmed”, as they say...and when we determine ahead of time to be faithful in all circumstances, it strengthens us when the time of challenge comes.
- I was reminded of the quote from the movie Count of Monte Cristo, when Dantes says to the young Albert Mondego:
 - *“Life is a storm, my young friend. You will bask in the sunlight one moment, be shattered on the rocks the next. What makes you a man is what you do when that storm comes. You must look into that storm and shout: Do your worst, for I will do mine! Then the fates will know you [for the man you truly are].”*
- To be Christian...especially to be Catholic...we have to be ready to stand in the face of challenge...for challenge will come. This is the promised crucible in which our faith is tested.
- It will probably not be in the form of kings threatening to rip out your tongue; in our society it may simply be refusing to go along with the crowd in doing wrong...or false accusations of prejudice and “intolerance”, or—you kids—not being popular or fashionable—holding onto chastity in the face of pressure to give in to sinful sexual encounters.
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- But know that God gives you grace to successfully resist any sin... resist any trial...as He has to those who have gone before us.
- As St. Paul tells us: *“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”* (1Cor 10:13)
- So when they call you intolerant for holding to the truths of the faith...when they persecute you on account of Christ...say to them

words like those with which Joshua challenged the Israelites “...*if you be unwilling to serve the [God], choose this day whom you will serve—the gods of sinful pleasure, selfishness, hatred. But as for me and my [household], we will serve the LORD.*”

(Jos 24:15 RSV)

Reading 1

[2 Mc 7:1-2, 9-14](#)

It happened that seven brothers with their mother were arrested and tortured with whips and scourges by the king, to force them to eat pork in violation of God's law. One of the brothers, speaking for the others, said: "What do you expect to achieve by questioning us? We are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors."

At the point of death he said: "You accursed fiend, you are depriving us of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us up to live again forever. It is for his laws that we are dying."

After him the third suffered their cruel sport. He put out his tongue at once when told to do so, and bravely held out his hands, as he spoke these noble words: "It was from Heaven that I received these; for the sake of his laws I disdain them; from him I hope to receive them again." Even the king and his attendants marveled at the young man's courage, because he regarded his sufferings as nothing.

After he had died, they tortured and maltreated the fourth brother in the same way. When he was near death, he said, "It is my choice to die at the hands of men with the hope God gives of being raised up by him; but for you, there will be no resurrection to life."

[Ps 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (15b) Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

Hear, O LORD, a just suit;
attend to my outcry;
hearken to my prayer from lips without deceit.

R. Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

My steps have been steadfast in your paths,
my feet have not faltered.
I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;

incline your ear to me; hear my word.

R. Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

Keep me as the apple of your eye,

hide me in the shadow of your wings.

But I in justice shall behold your face;

on waking I shall be content in your presence.

R. Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

[2 Thes 2:16-3:5](#)

Reading 2

Brothers and sisters:

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father,
who has loved us and given us everlasting encouragement
and good hope through his grace,

encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed
and word.

Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us,
so that the word of the Lord may speed forward and be glorified,
as it did among you,

and that we may be delivered from perverse and wicked people,
for not all have faith.

But the Lord is faithful;
he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.

We are confident of you in the Lord that what we instruct you,
you are doing and will continue to do.

May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God
and to the endurance of Christ.

[Lk 20:27-38](#) or [Lk 20:27, 34-38](#)

Gospel

Some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection,
came forward and put this question to Jesus, saying,

"Teacher, Moses wrote for us,

If someone's brother dies leaving a wife but no child,

his brother must take the wife

and raise up descendants for his brother.

Now there were seven brothers;

the first married a woman but died childless.

Then the second and the third married her,

and likewise all the seven died childless.

Finally the woman also died.

Now at the resurrection whose wife will that woman be?

For all seven had been married to her."

Jesus said to them,
"The children of this age marry and remarry;
but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age
and to the resurrection of the dead
neither marry nor are given in marriage.
They can no longer die,
for they are like angels;
and they are the children of God
because they are the ones who will rise.
That the dead will rise
even Moses made known in the passage about the bush,
when he called out 'Lord, '
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;
and he is not God of the dead, but of the living,
for to him all are alive."

or

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