

## *Ordinary Time 14B 2015*

### *Power Made Perfect in Weakness*

There are moments when it seems everything is going wrong; everything is falling apart. Although we know such moments occur in every life, it is easy to become discouraged. But it is at such time failure and weakness that we have an opportunity to grow in the Christian life. It is at such moments that we discover who we truly are.

Jesus and Paul experienced such moments of failure and weakness in their ministry. When Jesus returned to Nazareth, after preaching the gospel and performing so many miracles, the people of his hometown were puzzled by what they heard about him. How is it possible that this Jesus, whom they have known for so many years, can perform such mighty deeds? Where did he get this power? Where did he get this authority? Because they were so familiar with Jesus, the people of Nazareth did not understand Jesus. And so, at the crucial moment, when he returned to bring them salvation, they rejected him

. St. Paul had a similar experience at Corinth. Although he was the one who established the church there, many of the Corinthians were attracted to other preachers whom they thought more powerful and eloquent than Paul.

Despite the failure and rejection they experienced, Jesus and Paul continued to preach the gospel. When the people of Nazareth rejected him, Jesus was amazed

at their lack of faith in the power of God, but he preached the gospel elsewhere.

When the Corinthians ridiculed Paul as weak and despicable, he responded that he would gladly boast in his weaknesses so that the power of God could dwell in him. He understood that the power of God was at work within him in the midst of his weakness and failure. Paul endured insults, hardships, and persecutions because he understood that when he was weak he was strong because God was at work within him.

Here is the great secret of the Christian life. Here is the great lesson of today's liturgy: We don't have to succeed in everything we do because the power of God is at work in our weakness and failures. Indeed, it is precisely when we fail and are weak that God's power is most effective in our lives.

It's easy to become discouraged these days when people ridicule and mock our faith as old fashion and out of step with the times. It is easy to become discouraged when so many reject the gospel we believe. But there is no need to be discouraged. There is no need to feel sorry for ourselves. God's power is made perfect in weakness and failure. And so, even when we fail, the word of God endures forever. When others reject the gospel, the word of God endures forever. For, God's power is at work and made perfect in our weakness and failure.