

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time – 11/15/20

When I was a kid our house was broken into. My oldest sister was in high school and there was a concert that night. So that's where we went. My dad was working second shift at the time so he wasn't with us.

Anyway, after the concert we arrived home late in the evening, opened the garage door and drove in. We were all surprised because the door from the garage into the house was wide open and the lights were on. Then one of us realized that the garage window was open. Suddenly a little bit of terror set in and we backed out of the garage and drove to the neighbor's house.

We were certainly taken by surprise that night and I guess we weren't very prepared. However, we lived in a little neighborhood with no crime at all. It was totally unexpected.

This happens in life all the time. We just can't anticipate everything that might come along. But this can't be the way we approach eternity.

In the natural order a lot is left to chance and as I demonstrated a thief can come at any time and if he's bound and determined to get in there isn't a lot we can do about it. It can be rather terrifying at times.

It doesn't have to be this way in the supernatural order. Jesus didn't intend to leave our salvation to chance and He doesn't want us to live in terror

either. He wants us to live in the light of day so that no thief will ever disturb us.

One of the biggest helps is of course the Sacraments. The Church also recommends sacramentals, such as the Rosary, the Scapular and the Divine Mercy Chaplet and we always have recourse to the angels and the saints. Life is scary enough as is. Jesus doesn't want us to experience constant terror over our eternal destiny as well. He wants us to trust in Him.

St. Faustina, in her Diary, wrote of the terror of some of the dying. At one point Jesus asked her to help Him to save souls by praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for them.

She wrote, "Once I found myself in a strange cottage where an elderly man was dying amidst great torments. All about the bed was a multitude of demons and the family, who were crying. When I began to pray, the spirits of darkness fled, with hissing and threats directed at me. The soul became calm and, filled with trust, rested in the Lord." The demons didn't stand a chance against St. Faustina and the Chaplet.

Yet St. Faustina also experienced moments of terror in her own life. At one point Jesus rebuked her, saying: I am displeased when a soul yields to vain terrors. Who will dare to touch you when you are with Me? Most dear to Me is the soul that strongly believes in My goodness and has complete trust in Me.

Saint Faustina eventually learned to whom she could turn in order to allay her fears and be more united to Jesus. It was none other than St. Joseph.

The famous Litany of St. Joseph identifies him under the title, Terror of Demons, and it's no wonder. Surely, this man entrusted by God with the singular mission of caring for and protecting the Holy Family was endowed with graces enough to strike fear in the forces of darkness.

Saint Faustina wrote: Saint Joseph urged me to have a constant devotion to him. He promised me special help and protection.

When we find ourselves feeling overcome by the trials of life, let's turn to St. Joseph, Terror of Demons. For the people of St. Joseph the Worker, like St. Faustina, he is for sure our special patron.

From Heaven, he stands as a go-to saint to help us when forces beyond our control - including demonic forces - seek to unsettle us and pull us toward the night of despair and ruin where the thief awaits.

At the end of life, the thief will try to break in. It's a moment of supreme importance when many people are susceptible to despair. Saint Joseph, Terror of Demons, will quash such despair and all things that stand in opposition to the hope found in the risen Lord. From Heaven, this humble, quiet man of strength will lead us to the peace found only in Jesus.

Saint Joseph, Terror of Demons, pray for us and protect us.