8 A

MDP of God

A man who was very sick--turned to his doctor, as he was preparing to leave the
examination room and said, "Doctor, I’m afraid to die. *Tell me what
lies on the other side."*

Very quietly, the doctor said, "I don't know."

"You don't know? You, a Christian man, don’t know what is on the other
side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door; on the other side of
which came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door,
*a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of
gladness*.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog?

*He's never been in this room before*. **He didn't know what was inside**.

*He knew nothing except that his master was here*, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear.

The doctor went on: “I know little of what is on the other side of
death, but I do know one thing...*I know my Master is there and that’s
enough."*

My friends, all of our readings today from God’s Word are making a similar point—*that God is with us*—**we don’t need to fear**

Our God promises in our 1st reading today that He’ll never abandon us—no matter what we might face—*even when we face terrible things*—**hurtful things—painful things**—*that He’ll never abandon us*

In our gospel Jesus speaks of worry as being something that’s poisonous to our relationship with God—He says, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor
was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field,
which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow,
will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?
**So do not worry**…

I found a quote from a Dr E. Stanley Jones---and it goes like this: “I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is.

*I am so made that worry and anxiety are sand in the machinery of life*; **faith is the oil.**

I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and anxiety.

In anxiety and worry, my being is gasping for breath--these are not my native air.

*But in faith and confidence*, **I breathe freely**--these are my native air.

(He goes on to say)—“A John Hopkins University doctor says, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non- worriers, but that is a fact." But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, *for faith and not for fear.*

God made us that way. **To live by worry is to live against reality.**

In that story I began with---the dog on the other side of the door

Even though the dog had never been in that room before—he was excited to go in *because he knew his master was there*

 He knew with his master he’d find joy

 He knew with his master he’d be safe

 *He longed to be with his master*

As followers of Jesus we know God is with us—because Jesus promised He’d be with us till the end of time

 He promised He’d send the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts

Our God has promised that He’ll never forget us

Of course in this life—we don’t see God face to face in all His glory---but He promises that for His faithful people we will on the other side see Him face to face—that we’ll see Him in all His glory

*But St Paul alludes to God’s presence* in our lives here and now in our 2nd reading

St Paul said in that reading—and I quote---“ Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ **and stewards of the mysteries of God**.”

Now the Greek word there translated as “mysteries” –in Greek the word is “mysterium”—and it’s translated into Latin as “Sacramentum”—which is translated into English as “sacraments”

So another way this passage could be translated is to translate it as, “Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the sacraments of God”

St Paul is assuring us that in the sacraments that we encounter the living Lord

That in the sacraments we enter into the very life of God *and He enters into our lives*

So in all of our readings God’s Word is challenging us to examine how we look at our lives and to reflect on where our priorities are

So my friends, I need to ask: What are you living for? Where is God in your lives?

If we’re living for God—*then whatever happens in life* –**good or bad**—is an opportunity to either rejoice in the gifts of God or to turn to Him in our need

But if we’re living for possessions or money [what Jesus calls mammon]—if we’re living so that we can have a comfortable life—if we’re living with our hearts set on the things of this world rather than having them set on our relationship with Him

 *Then we’re going to be worried that we’ll lose the things of this world*

 We’ll be worried that we won’t get all the things we want

 We’ll be devastated when we lose something **or someone we love**

*But when we’re living for God*

 When our goal in life is to glorify Him

 When our desire is to please Him

 When our yearning is to bring Him honor

*Then everything that happens*—**again good or bad**—is an opportunity to glorify God—an opportunity to grow in our trust of God—an opportunity to surrender our wills and embrace His Will for our lives

My friends—*our master is with us—*He calls us to trust that He shares His very life with us in the sacraments and He promises that on the other side of life *His faithful will bask in His glory forever*

My dear people, like the dog in the story I began with –*let’s long for the presence of our Master.* —Let’s recognize His love as He shares His very life with us in the sacraments. --- Let’s trust in His plan for us as we journey through this life,—*even when we don’t understand what He’s doing in our lives,* ---**and they’ll be a lot of times we don’t understand**

But worry and anxiety won’t help us understand—it only keeps us from surrendering our wills to His Will

And so, let’s go forward filled with hope and confidence and joy—knowing our Master is with us.

And *let’s yearn* for the day when we will see Him in all His glory when He leads us to our true home

 God bless you