32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (2013)

Theme: Resurrection

Readings: 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14 / 2 Thess. 2:16 – 3:5 / Luke 20:27, 34-38

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

In the first reading, faith and hope in the resurrection motivated a mother and her seven sons to endure torture and death; and in the gospel reading, the Sadducees failed in their attempt to defend their position that there is no resurrection. Beloved, the resurrection is real! It is the beginning of the everlasting great sunshine of Heaven!

Last Sunday, some of us witnessed the partial eclipse of the sun. This reminds me of the total eclipse of sun that many saw in 2006. In each case the darkness was for only a few minutes. Beloved eternal life is like the sun; and the resurrection is like the glorious re-appearance of sunshine. In this case the sufferings and challenges of this life are like a partial eclipse and even death is but a brief moment of a total eclipse.

The mother and her seven sons in the first reading understood this very well: they believed that the pains of torture and even death at the hands of their oppressors were but brief moments of darkness compared to the great light of the resurrection which shines forth forever. For this reason they were ready to be tortured to death one after the other.

Motivated by the everlasting life that comes with the resurrection, the first son boldly told his torturers: "What do you expect to achieve by questioning us? We are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our forefathers." In his turn, the second son said: "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 son 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." When the fourth son 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."

Like these brothers and their mother we also experience challenges or difficulties in our lives. Sometimes we are challenged to choose between hunger and faithfulness to God; between keeping our job and faithfulness to God; between an illegal means to success and faithfulness to God; etc. Often however, unlike the brothers and their mother, we do not experience physical torture or a real threat of death; yet we choose the easy path and break our relationship with God! Today, the Lord God is exhorting us to be motivated by the heroic story of the first reading. Like the mother and her sons, may our faith and hope in the resurrection enable us to see every challenge or suffering in our life as a mere brief darkness of an eclipse, and may we stand victoriously as we witness the passing away of this darkness and the glorious re-appearance of the everlasting sunshine of Heaven! Amen!