



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 15, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

“Be Strong, Be Firm, and Be Persevering in Life”

From a human perspective, we desire wellness, avoid pain and suffering, delight everyone, and enjoy life with wealth, health, and all the good things. Suffering is unacceptable, especially in a culture that exhilarates much of riches and fame. Who wants to endure suffering or be mocked? None of us would say, “Me!” Our humanity, overwhelmed with pride and selfishness, makes it so.

For Jesus, it is different. He embraces the Father’s will to sacrifice His life for us. Peter recognizes Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, with power and might. He never expected Jesus, the Son of Man, to suffer greatly, be rejected by the elders, die, and rise after three days. Peter rebukes Jesus for saying such things, but Jesus rebukes him in turn, telling Peter that he thinks as humans do, not as God does.

Peter’s confession of faith deepens our understanding of Christ’s mission. Jesus, the Son of God, came to bring salvation, not in a lofty or admirable way, but through suffering, dying, and resurrection. This is why Jesus rebukes Peter.

Pope Francis’ words guide us to cling to Jesus’ teachings rather than the world. The call to suffering is to turn away from sinfulness, giving up our lives for Christ. The good things in this world are temporary. Knowing Jesus by heart allows us to profess our faith truthfully. Giving up our lives for the Lord brings true riches and happiness, testifying that Christ is indeed the Savior, the Messiah of the world.

Reflecting deeply, we recognize how to endure pain as Jesus did, trusting His grace and mercy to lift us as the Heavenly Father did. He gave Jesus strength, embracing it with love and care for our salvation.

Professing faith in Jesus means embracing all that life offers. Amid pain and suffering, it is crucial to remember what Jesus endured. We cannot only have faith when things go smoothly but also doubt when they go wrong. We may not see the wisdom yet, as Peter did not initially. But witnessing Jesus’ journey, Peter became a staunch witness, even giving up his life for Him.

Let us be strong, firm, and persevering. Jesus is with us and always will be.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual