

PLEASE DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ACCEPT AND DO THE WILL OF GOD

Fear can be necessary or unnecessary in our daily choices depending on their outcomes. Fear is necessary or beneficial when it prevents us from doing things that can hurt us. It is the fear of getting sick that prevents us from eating or drinking things that are not good for our health. The fear of road accidents prevents some people from reckless driving or driving on a very slippery road. There are people who try to do the will of God today because of fear of losing Heaven or because of fear of eternal punishment. Fear became unnecessary or an obstacle when it tries to prevent us from accepting and doing the will of God. In the Gospel reading today (Matthew 1:18-24), Joseph became afraid when he discovered that his betrothed wife, the Virgin Mary, was pregnant. Joseph, being a righteous man, was afraid of displeasing God by breaking the Jewish law which forbade a man from marrying a pregnant woman, a pregnancy of which he knew nothing about and he did not want to shame the Virgin Mary because of God's will to treat others as we would like to be treated. As a result, he planned to secretly divorce his wife, but God, through His angel, told him in his dream not to be afraid to take Mary his wife into his home, that it was through the Holy Spirit that the child was conceived. Joseph did as the angel requested. FEAR COULD HAVE PREVENTED JOSEPH FROM CARRYING OUT THE MISSION WHICH GOD DESTINED FOR HIM; GOD WANTED JOSEPH TO BE THE FOSTER FATHER OF JESUS CHRIST. "Human fear seems to be the main roadblock in accomplishing God's will because we have passages like, "Do not be afraid!" or "Have no fear!" or "Fear not!" spread throughout both the Old and New Testaments" (Fr. Jerry). FAITH IN GOD DIMINISHES THE FEAR WHICH ACCOMPANIES ACCEPTING AND DOING THE WILL OF GOD. Joseph was a faithful Jew who was aware of most of the mighty things which God did for his ancestors starting from freeing them from slavery, the wars which God helped them win, and many other miracles which God did for his people. Joseph believed that nothing was impossible for God to do, as a result, he believed that his wife became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit as the angel of God told him. Remember that the idea of the Holy Spirit was strange to the people then and it was strange or unbelievable for a woman to become pregnant outside of the way most people were familiar with. JOSEPH, BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH IN GOD AND WITHOUT DOUBT, ACCEPTED AND BELIEVED EVERYTHING GOD SAID THROUGH HIS ANGEL. WHICH WILL OF GOD ARE WE AFRAID TO ACCEPT AND BELIEVE? Some people are afraid to accept and believe in what Jesus said in the Gospel according to Matthew 7:21. Jesus, in this Gospel reading, pointed out that only those who do the will of God will enter the Kingdom of God against the common belief that says everybody, no matter how one lives one's life on earth, will go to Heaven after death. This notion is satanic because its aim is to discourage people from pleasing God and from living their lives as Jesus instructed. GOD'S WILL OR COMMANDMENTS AND TEACHINGS ARE FOR OUR OWN GOOD. Imagine a situation where there is nothing like love or forgiveness, where everyone is free to hurt anyone. Our world is as it is now even though a great population, due to their belief, struggles to love or forgive. How will the same world be if there is no belief restraining a portion of the world population from living as they like? Please let us accept and believe in God's will for us. When God asks us to do something, He always helps us with His grace. The name given to Jesus before His birth; "Emmanuel – God is with us – is the Advent promise and our reason to be confident rather than fearful" (Fr. Jerry). God wants us to humble ourselves, that is, acknowledge our sinfulness and seek His forgiveness but sometimes we are

afraid to do that, maybe we do not want others to look down on us or see us as the worst people. This is the reason why some people find it difficult to go to confession. Some of us are afraid to associate with certain people because we are afraid of what people will say. If we cannot love each other or treat each other fairly on earth, I wonder if we can relate well in Heaven where love reigns. WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT US IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US. MAY GOD HELP US ACCEPT AND DO HIS WILL ON EARTH AND REWARD US WITH HIS KINGDOM, AMEN.