

Daily Homily

Monday, Fourth Week of Lent

23 March 2020

On the Psalm: Psalm 30: 2, 4, 5-6, 11-12a, 13b ([uscbb daily readings](#))

In my prayerful reflection over God's Word today, a memory came forward. My brother, James, lived in Maine for several years. He's a chef – so recommended for every family. The best thing was having the opportunity to visit him just about each year either in the summer or the fall. Maine is a great getaway in both seasons. The towns of Maine reminded me of Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon (even though that town was created for Minnesota). The towns are small and quaint. They are typical America. Somehow every town is on a lake, an inlet, and I think a couple of oceans even. The Catholic Church is there as well. Picture this: wooden church, with high rising steeple, everything is white washed, white picket fence encloses the grounds, the stain glass windows burst with color, the floor boards squeak with every step and the pews are no less noisy, the inside smells of bees wax and faded incense and coffee (the back of one nave has seen its fair share of coffee and donut socials.) The church could hold 100 people, if they were thin enough. The church was initially named Our Lady of Good Hope. However, it merged with another church from a neighboring town and it took on a new name: St. Brendan the Navigator. He follows me everywhere. I don't mind.

My brothers Mike and Jim and I attended Mass there over the years. I love going to Mass elsewhere and while on vacation, and I like sitting in the pews "incognito." Sometimes I just want to take it all in from the pew perspective. Mass begins. We sing. We pray. We sit. We listen. God is talking. It was the psalm that hit me. The organist/cantor, one and the same, led the psalm. It was the same one we hear today: *I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.* Even after she sang it and we went onto the second reading, the psalm stuck. The melody, the inflection, the tone, the message didn't want to leave me just yet. Even the Gospel couldn't shake it. We sit. The homily begins. The priest starts telling a story ... a career downfall ... I had heard the story at least 1,000 times in my life and have probably told it at least 100 times in my own homilies. So my thoughts wandered. They were headed to the sound of music until there I was with God singing to me ... *I have rescued you.* As I sat with Jim and Mike in the pew, I started to think about growing up with them and even how God has rescued them from various things, people, situations, missteps, and missed directions. As I sat there, it all came back to how the Lord has done so for my life as well. Time and again, He has rescued me. Mostly, from myself as well as the Enemy.

We sing this psalm several times in the course of a liturgical year. It's one of those psalms whose musical notes should be engrained within us like other popular hymns we've been singing since all of us were much younger. Can you hear the music of this psalm? Close your eyes and try it: *"I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me."* Picture God singing it to you. I heard *"Come and praise me, Tom, for I have rescued you."* It's true. He has. It's true for you. Over the course of your life, how has God rescued you, set you straight, lifted you up, pushed you out of dangers way, pulled you from sinking, caught you from falling? Perhaps He has even anonymously prevented dangers unknown to you. So today, praise Him and His power to save.