


## Homily Rerun: May 14, 2017 - Fr. John Konyeke

### DO NOT BE AFRAID, TRUST IN GOD



A story was told of a little girl of 9 years who was in the aircraft with the mother, when there came a turbulence over the aircraft after many miles away above the sea level. The little girl paid less regard to the official announcement that everybody should be seated and remain calm. That is, at this time the obedience of all passengers was cordial except the little girl whose instinct was still in a playing mood. She continued to play as fear seized those who were afraid. Thanks be to God, there was calm at the end. After this, one of the passengers, walked up to the girl and asked, why were you not afraid during the turbulence? She answered, 'I knew, nothing would have happened'. How did you know that, he asked? The little girl responded, 'I knew because my biological father is the pilot.' He knew I boarded with mum. He wouldn't allow it because, he wouldn't want to lose me, and he loves me so much. And so, I was not afraid.

Jesus was about to go back to where he came from. He is now getting things ready for those he would hand over, those who would continue his work on earth, his disciples. But as he does this preparation, the disciples became apprehensive; apprehensive of their future without Jesus. And so, in today's gospel, he reassured them of his constant care and love in these words *Do not let your hearts be troubled, trust in God and trust in me; there are many rooms in my father's house*. It is ending so fast, the disciples couldn't believe the pain of parting. Earlier, they had thought that Jesus would be a great warrior king, but he became a true shepherd. They placed their hopes in him, he did many good things before the people, performed miracles but at the end, he died a shameful death on the cross. During this time, the apostles ran away, one betrayed, other denied him, others were too afraid to come near. After his burial, his body was missing. They were too terrified to grasp what was happening to them, until the good news of his rising from the dead. And so, at this time also, Jesus continued to appear to them to reassure them that he has risen, Peter became strong again, Thomas will doubt no longer, those on the road to Emmaus came back to the fold. Life became normal again, he stayed with them for forty days after the resurrection.

Now, he wants to go back to heaven. The disciples cannot stand it again, they couldn't cope with the message. He had to reassure them, do not be afraid, I am with you. You will do greater things in my name. Dear child of God, what are you afraid of today, here and now? Offer it to God. What are your fears? What is frightening you in your life, making you not to live a happy life? Remember that fear simply means *false events appear real*. Do not take your fears/defeat personally, don't gloom because you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. What you are afraid of is afraid of you. Don't give up because of what you see now. See, you got to find something within you to move you, drive you, and energize you to conquer the inner enemy-fear. This year and indeed today and now, we celebrate the centenary visit of our Mother Mary to the 3 shepherds of Fatima. During that visit, Lucy was convinced within her of the whole situation, even when the people were mocking them. When the Lady appeared, she said, *I know you will come to us dear Lady*. Lucy found strength in her faith, just as the little girl in our story found faith in her father who is the pilot. The statement of Lucy attracted the heavenly statements of hope, for our Lady Said, *Do not be afraid, the war will end soon, and the soldiers will return to their homes. It will end in the triumph of God.* (the WW1 28 July 1914- 11 Nov 1918).

*God says trust in me. Have trust in God that your situation is in the hands of God. It is said that dreams without goals remain dreams and will end up with disappointments.* What are your goals as a Christian? Are you a disciple of faith, a disciple of Jesus? Don't give excuses why you should be afraid. Anyone who wants to kill a wild animal should be ready to be killed by the wild animal. Be ready to accept your faith and live it out, for the grass is never greener at the other side. Develop a faith-mental mind set and solid Christian stamina that will also drive you to hope. This was the mindset of the apostles in the first reading, no distraction from their calling. Refuse to be distracted with your fears, anxieties, cares and worries. Remember that between your goals and achievement are discipline and consistency. Discipline in following the master and consistency in the word of God. I hope that we will put our shoes near the bed, so that each morning, we will get down on our knees.

Let's Pray: Lord Jesus, I have chosen not to be afraid or complain. I replace my complain with prayers. For complains are setback. I start using more energy and time to pray rather than complain or be afraid. For complaints attract God's anger and breed frustration and rancor but prayers open up Spiritual energies. The devil feeds on complains but God waits for us at the altar of prayer. There is nothing too difficult for God to change. Lord Jesus, what a friend we have in you. We suffer long and more when we do not turn to you for help and guidance. You have been our help from ages past and our hope for years to come. We implore you to intervene timely in our affairs. Do not leave us to the fate of human whims and caprices, but let your will prevail here on earth as it is in heaven, Amen.