

Youth Sunday Sermon

I once found myself in a challenging experience herding sheep. However these sheep were not your typical farm animals, but instead a group of about 20 children dressed in costumed sheep heads swinging on the banisters of the altar, running down the aisles, and climbing over the pews. Now I know you're thinking, had the members of the Alter Guild seen the events taking place, they may have had a heart attack... and I'm sure they were curious where all the tiny handprints had come from the next morning while setting up for communion. Nothing I could say or do would calm these little rascals down, so I just sat and waited for 11 o'clock to come around so their parents would take them off my hands. My experience directing the Christmas pageant that year is just one of the many experiences I've had over the years where I've felt completely out of control.

I am a complete control freak. When things don't go as I've planned them or I am not sure what's going to come up next, I lose it and I'll be the first to admit that. I've experienced this struggle a lot this

year: trying to decide my home for the next four years, coping with my beloved grandmother's death, and just trying to keep up with life in general. Looking back, I wish that I would have reflected on these issues keeping in mind the first few verses of today's Gospel.

In John 14:1-4, Jesus tells his disciples "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God but also trust in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place I am going." John 14:1-4 is all about trusting in the Lord at *all times*, which I feel many of us struggle with. God doesn't give us a play by play of the difficult moments in our lives. He doesn't tell us what sickness, death, disaster, or changes will come in the next day or even the next decade. But through this uncertainty we can find rest that Jesus has told us enough to sustain us through all of these difficult times in life. This doesn't mean that we'll never make a mistake or that our faith will never waiver, but it does mean that in the

end everything will be okay- our faith will grow and God will make good on His promises. God is working behind the scenes in all of our struggles to execute the perfect plan he has for each and every one of us.

God is not just behind the scenes in our struggles- he is there with us through every joy and happy moment in our lives. He makes himself seen in the most beautiful and even the most miniscule ways- whether it is through the sunshine after the storm, the laughter we experience with our friends and family, or the flowers blooming in the garden. Every moment that we encounter is a work of God. For this reason, we must remember not only to turn to God in our times of trouble, but at all times. We should always remember the commands of one of my favorite verses Romans 12:12, “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer”.

God is in control of our lives at all times, even when we feel like we have lost all command and direction. Let him be in control. Learn to embrace the changes he makes in your life. Give thanks and praise to

him for everything in your life, because every one of us in this place is truly blessed.

I don't know what you are going through in your lives today, but I do know that God is going to make everything alright in His perfect timing. It won't always make sense. It won't always be comfortable or enjoyable. But God is working something good in us if we will humbly submit and be alright with not having all the answers all the time.

Always remember the words of today's Gospel "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."