

These days, at least for me, when I see or hear that something is “FREE,” I’m a little skeptical.

You always wonder - “What’s the catch?” After all, nobody gives anything away for free.

Usually it’s a free product, just give us your credit card number for shipping.

Or else they want your name and address so that you get a barrage of mail for different products and services.

Or maybe they get your phone number, and you get even more of those annoying phone calls in the middle of the day with the long pause before anybody speaks.

In fact, I even ran across an article online where there is a legal difference between a FREE Sample and a FREE Trial.

A free sample is something that’s free. A free trial means that you get to have it for a period of time, and then you get charged for it.

Anyway, FREE has usually come to mean something that has strings attached ... or if it really is FREE, well ... then it’s probably worthless.

In today’s readings there is a constant theme of Faith.

In the First Reading, we hear of the Faith of the Israelites, who believed because they saw God’s mighty works in freeing them from Egypt.

In the Second Reading, we hear of the patriarchs - especially Abraham ... whose Faith was so strong it was accorded as righteousness.

And in the Gospel, we hear of how we must act on our Faith so that we will be prepared for Christ’s return.

There’s a sort of mathematical symmetry in the readings today. Israel saw and believed ... Abraham believed and was rewarded ... and we are to act on our Faith.

Yet, we tend to sort of let Faith slip through the cracks.

And part of that might be because the Supernatural Virtue of Faith is a FREE gift from God. We receive it in Baptism, it is strengthened in Confirmation, and it is energized ever time we receive the Eucharist.

But, because it’s FREE, we may not give it the credence it deserves.

Yet through our relationship to God in Jesus Christ, we have the ability to act on our Faith. We don’t believe because we have seen miracles ... rather, we receive Faith as a free gift ... and through that Faith are able to do the mighty deeds that God has called us to do.

In the Second Reading, we hear that:

*Faith is the realization of what is hoped for
and evidence of things not seen.*

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray to be more open to the FREE gift of Faith - which we have all received already in Baptism. May the graces of this Eucharist strengthen our Faith to allow us to go forth from this place ... as true disciples of Jesus Christ ... to be messengers of the Gospel ... and to be the evidence in the world ... that Jesus Christ is Lord ... and to the power of our own Faith in God and Jesus Christ.