

On board a Navy ship, you have very limited personal storage. Under your mattress is a space about five inches deep. You lift up the mattress, and everything you have with you has to fit underneath. So, when I would go out to sea, I could only bring a certain amount of things with me.

When we returned, I would unpack everything, and then would realize that sub-consciously, that I had laid everything out on top of my mattress, as if I were still limited by life aboard a ship. And for the next week or so, I would only make use of a small amount of what was in my apartment. It was almost as if my mind was still on the ship, even though the rest of me was back home on shore.

Saint Paul reminds us that we are members of “the household of God,” that is, God’s family. We aren’t “strangers and sojourners,” that is, we are no longer wandering and homeless. We know where we belong. We belong with God, in the community of Saints, held together through Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel we hear about St. Thomas, whose feast we celebrate today, and the episode that gives us the phrase “doubting Thomas.” What is important to note is that this is not the story of the “Denial of Thomas.” When confronted with the reports of Jesus’ resurrection, Thomas didn’t just say, “No. That never happened.” But he doubted. Doubt is somewhere in the middle, between faith and denial.

We all have received in our Baptism, the supernatural gifts, the supernatural graces, the supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love.

I think the question these readings ask us to address is, “how well do we engage our gifts of Faith, Hope, and Love in our daily lives.” These supernatural virtues are enormous, because they are gifts of God Himself.

Do we only use a small amount of our God-given Faith? Hope? Love?

Even though we have these infinite gifts, do we act as though we don’t really have access to them, or only use a small portion of them in our daily lives?

Let us pray that God will pour out His Spirit upon us, that we may grow more deeply in the gifts of Faith, Hope, and Love. Let us ask to more fully engage the graces that God continuously pours out upon us; so that as members of God’s household and family, we can more effectively shine the light of the Gospel in the world, to our neighbors, and to our brothers and sisters in the Faith.