

Morning Sun Religion Column • July 24, 2010

As kids, my brothers and I would sometimes pull the cushions off of the sofas and chairs and build forts with them in the living room. This was usually on rainy days when we couldn't go outside to play. It was great fun, until we had to clean it all up and get ready for supper.

In the first chapter of the Prophet Jeremiah, the prophet tells his readers:

*The word of the LORD came to me thus:
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I dedicated you,
a prophet to the nations I appointed you.*

*"Ah, Lord GOD!" I said,
I know not how to speak; I am too young."*

Sometimes, like the Prophet Jeremiah, when we are moved by the Holy Spirit to say or do something for the Lord, we end up with excuses. And as we move through life, our excuses often become for us a sort of fortress of cushions.

That is, we are comfortable with our excuses, and we use them to protect ourselves from having to go beyond our comfort zone and exercise our apostolic call as believers.

Reading further, Jeremiah tells us:

*But the LORD answered me,
Say not, "I am too young."*

*To whomever I send you, you shall go;
whatever I command you, you shall speak.
Have no fear before them,
because I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.*

In essence, when we move from using our excuses as barricades against God's call and God's grace; and instead bring them to God in prayer and supplication – we find that to God, no barrier is insurmountable.

When we approach God in humility and hand over our excuses, He not only removes the barriers, but brings us far beyond what we had expected.

It is important for us to realize that we are not called to save ourselves. God is always waiting for us to let Him into our lives, offer Him our struggles, and trust in Him to save us. Faith requires a humility that we are not the highest person in our chain-of-command. Rather, we are children of a loving God who desires to be part of our daily lives. God so desires to be with us that He sent His Son Jesus to be *Emmanuel*, literally 'God with us.'

Let us resolve to approach each new day, and each new challenge with God, through Jesus Christ, and in the Power of the Holy Spirit.