

History is filled with famous pairs. Antony and Cleopatra, Abbot and Costello, Barnum and Bailey, Batman and Robin, Donny and Marie, Bert and Ernie, Ferdinand and Isabella, Holmes and Watson. Jack and Jill, Laurel and Hardy, Laverne and Shirley ... and that's only halfway through the alphabet!

Split up a great pair, and you lose the pizzazz. Something doesn't seem right ... or maybe even seems lopsided.

In today's reading we hear once again from St. James, who admonishes his listeners ... and us as well ... to not separate our faith from what we do. In effect telling us that if we truly believe what we say we believe, then it will be apparent in how we live out our lives ... and how we relate to the people around us?

When we try to keep our faith private, and not let it penetrate our everyday life - we end up with something being out of whack ... lopsided ... not quite right.

Indeed, in the Gospel - when Jesus tries to explain the Cross to his disciples - the fulfillment of the prophecy we heard in the First Reading. But Peter, who has just been inspired by God the Father and identifies Jesus as the Christ ... loses that inspiration when he hears about the Cross ... and relying on his own ideas ... wants Jesus to forgo the Cross, since it doesn't fit his idea of what the ideal Messiah should be.

In a few moments, we will baptize this child. Who through the waters of this Sacrament, will become a child of God. Called to live out the life of the Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - as a disciple of Jesus Christ. There will be joy ... and there will be sorrow. Life will still have its ups and downs. There will be crosses to bear ... and there will be moments of unbelievable grace and love.

And so it is with all of our lives. There are always two sides to the coin. We draw strength from God's grace, and love, and mercy. Our faith must and will inform our actions and our works ... and as we live our lives ... relying on the help of God may we persevere in the life of grace as his beloved sons and daughters, redeemed in Christ and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.