

“Whoever has ears ought to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

When I first entered the Navy, it was after roughly 10 years of working at General Motors. Considering that in those days, we used to call G-M our “Generous Mother,” as a single guy, I was doing pretty well.

The first thing I missed in the Navy was space. I had a bunk and a locker.

After boot camp, I had a bit more freedom, and almost immediately the second thing I missed was money. I made in a week roughly the same amount of money that I made working one day at GM.

However, after some careful thought, I decided that on Sunday, the biggest bill in my wallet went into the collection at Mass. Now, a lot of times, this was an easy calculation. Nothing in the wallet, nothing in the collection. But other times, I’d open up and see a \$100 bill – half of my weekly income, pre-tax. But I always figured, “a deal’s a deal.”

In the first Reading, St. John recounts the words of Christ from a vision he had while exiled on Patmos. Already in the first century, Christians were doing “incomplete” works, and were “lukewarm.” And John’s Revelation warns them, to listen to the Spirit – not to the world.

The psalm talks about “righteousness” which in Hebrew means: integrity, justice, equity – or in other words “balanced.”

The Spirit calls us to live “balanced” lives. The world, on the other hand, calls us to live “mediocre” lives.

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Finally, in the Gospel, we hear the familiar story of Zacchaeus. The name Zacchaeus, again in Hebrew, means “pure” or “clean.”

Zacchaeus was short of stature. Now, considering that in first century Palestine, most people were short by modern standards, Zacchaeus very well may have been what we call one of the “little people.”

That makes his climbing the tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus even more of an extraordinary event.

For ourselves, in our lives, we often come up “short” in whatever way that is. Yet despite our shortness, we are called by the Gospel to step out in faith, or maybe even to “climb up” in faith, in order to become what Christ calls us to be.

So let us “listen to what the Spirit says” to us, and work to “balance” any parts of ourselves that are out of balance. Let us be open to the graces, freely given to us, that give us the extraordinary abilities we need to make up for our own “incompleteness” or “lukewarm-ness” ... Let us step out in Faith ... Faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ – in order to climb up to the heights to which we are invited ... in Faith.

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