

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, October 10, 2026
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle A

Once upon a time there was a king who summoned all his advisers to discuss a problem. The king said, “There are too many rocks in my kingdom. Every time I take a walk, my feet hurt, stepping on the rocks. I want you to carpet my whole kingdom so that whenever I walk, I’ll be walking on a carpet – something fitting for a king like me.” The advisers left the king, saying to themselves, “How can we put a carpet on all the land of this kingdom.” Finally, after one week, the advisers returned to the king with a solution. They carried two square pieces of carpet and said to the king, “Your Highness, if you always want to walk on a carpet, just wrap these two pieces of carpet around your feet and tie them tightly. Then, wherever you go, you will be walking on a carpet.” The advisers were wise. They saw that, instead of changing the kingdom, they had to change the king.

This is also true in everyday life. We often want to alter our surroundings to fit ourselves, instead of altering ourselves to fit our surroundings. We often wish to change the circumstances of our lives instead of changing ourselves. There is a Spanish proverb that captures this point sharply: “If you cannot have what you want, then learn to want what you already have.”

St. Paul learned this important lesson very well. He says in today's second reading, "I know indeed how to live in humble circumstances, I know also how to live with abundance." "In every circumstance and in all things, I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need." Whatever circumstance, Paul learned to adjust himself to it. He did not try to adjust the circumstance to himself. Just like the king in our story, Paul had learned how to adjust himself to the circumstances of his rocky kingdom. So, if Paul was praised, he was happy. If he was criticized, he was happy, too. If he had much, he was happy. If he had little, he was happy, too. He did not try to change the world or others to fit himself. Again, he learned to adjust himself to it. What enabled Paul to do so? Listen to what he says: "I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me."

Paul is not talking about his own personal resources. He is referring to the strength he receives from Christ. He is actually talking about his humble reliance on the Lord, who empowers him to overcome hardships and difficulties.

As we go through various hardships and difficulties, should we indulge in wishful thinking that soon our circumstances will become better? Should we not rather learn to adjust to these circumstances? Our outward circumstances may go up and down. But our inner attitude or disposition should be a state of permanent joy and contentment.

If you truly possess Jesus and if you really believe that you have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, as St. Paul puts it, you have no reason to be sad and malcontent. For us to be happy and content, it is important to remember this: We cannot always get what we want and desire, but often, we get what we need. We cannot always change the reality that does not meet our expectation, but we can find the strength to meet it courageously. We cannot always have everything necessary for enjoyment, but we can teach ourselves to enjoy what we have.

So, do not postpone contentment. Enjoy now! How much we enjoy what we have is more important than how much we have. The world is full of people who have more than what they need –and who have more than they know what to do with –but they cannot be happy, they are not happy.

As Benjamin Franklin said, “To be content makes a poor person rich, but to be malcontent makes a rich person poor.” Indeed, it is the capacity to enjoy life that brings contentment and happiness.

Let us allow Christ to empower us to find God in every circumstance. Let him be our strength for everything.

“I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.”