

Saturday, April 8, 2017

EZ 37:21-28

JN 11:45-56

Will. It has many meanings, among them: to desire, to be willing, to indicate future time, to express determination, compulsion, inclination, inevitability, expectation or possibility.

In the first reading today from Ezekiel, we hear God say, “I will,” six times in his promises to the Israelites. God promises to bring them back to their own land, make them one nation, deliver them from their sins, make with them a covenant of peace, multiply them and dwell with them forever as their God, claiming them as his people.

Wow! Those are pretty awesome promises! God continues with more promises in the responsorial psalm from Jeremiah, stating, “I will turn their mourning into joy, I will console and gladden them after their sorrows.” Although this is taken as a promise for the people of Israel, it is indeed a promise for the followers of Christ after his crucifixion and death. Jesus Christ will rise from the dead, will deliver us from our sins and will overcome death and destruction just for us.

Through his teaching, preaching and miracles, many came to believe in Jesus—so much so that it upset the status quo of the temple hierarchy. They worried, “What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him.” (Jn 11:47, 48) Once again, it is that expectation of things to come, and the Pharisees were right on target—so much so that the machinations would be set into place to eliminate their perceived threat. Less than a week later, Jesus would be condemned to die, but we know how the story ends. God keeps his promises to all who believe in him.

Reflection Questions:

What does “will” mean to me? Do I make promises to others or to God that are hard to keep? How may I learn to correct that?

Do I believe in and rely on God’s promises, even when my journey is difficult, scary, or unknown?

Reflection by Jan Bergstedt, St. Paul Parish, Valparaiso.