

**What is faith?**

**Superstition? Mythology?**

**Something against reason? Something for the simple or children?**

**Then how do we explain some of the greatest minds in history were men and women of faith?**

**St Paul, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas**

**JP 11 Mother Theresa, Theresa of Liseaux**

**GK Chesterton, J R Tolkien**

**But is faith just belief?**

**Are these the same?**

**Most of us here have not been to China or Antarctica**

**But I would say most of us believe they exist**

**But does believing they exist have any impact on how we live our lives?**

**Or we want only to believe what we can prove**

**Reduce God to scientific proof and I will believe**

**So if faith and belief were the same:**

**Why do over 95% of Americans say they believe in God?**

**I would venture to guess that 100% of those that claim to be Catholic**

**If this is the case**

**Where are they today?**

**Why are not our churches packed every Sunday**

**As if it was Easter or Christmas?**

**Christ doesn't ask:**

**When I return will there be any belief on earth?**

**But rather: will there be any faith?**

**Belief in God is easy**

**Because belief makes no demands on us**

**But faith in God implies a relationship**

**And faith calls us to act on what we believe**

**Our first reading speaks of the faith of our fathers**

**The Night of the Passover of our fathers**

**The Night**

**The Night the Angel of the Lord took the firstborn of all the Egyptians**

**Man and beast**

**That night was a terrifying night**

**That Night was foretold to the Israelites by Moses**

**The people believed what was told them**

**And they put that belief into action**

**They acted on God's promises without proof**

**They sacrificed the lambs**

**They put the blood on their doorposts**

**This was an act of faith**

**Confident in God's mercy and justice**

**For Catholic Christians**

**Today is That Night**

**Sunday Mass**

**Holy Days of Obligation**

**In a very real way,**

**This is our Passover**

**We don't sacrifice lambs**

**We participate in the eternal sacrifice of Jesus Christ**

**We don't paint blood on our doorposts**

**But when we consume the Eucharist**

**We mark our souls with the Blood of Christ**

**If the blood of an animal would protect the Israelite nation**

**How much more does the Blood of Christ protect us from Satan?**

**Our Letter to the Hebrews also points to faith**

**How Abraham's belief turned to faith**

**When an unknown God speaks to him**

***Leave your land for a land you do not know***

**Abraham imparts on a sojourn of faith**

**Before this, Abraham was a rich and powerful man**

**He was asked to give it all up**

**Although he was an old man**

**He was promised a son**

**Abraham's faith brought new life**

**Issiac was born**

**Then his faith was put to a test**

**He was told to offer up his son**

**In faith, he was willing until the Angel stayed his hand**

**Abraham received the promise**

**And in faith he went forth**

**Convicted that the promise was trustworthy**

**Even though he never saw the fulfillment**

**For this, he is our father in faith**

**Our Gospel speaks of this faith**

**It calls us to live lives of faith**

**This is not an easy life**

**Sell what you have**

**It is a life of detachment from the visible**

**And attachment to what we believe**

**To act on what we believe**

**And to do so with confidence**

***Do not be afraid***

***Gird your loins*****Prepare for battle****A battle with the world****A battle with our passions and ego*****Light your lamp*****Keep the fire for Him burning****Not an easy thing to do when we know not the day or time of his  
return****There is only one guarantee****Today we have one less day to prepare than we had yesterday****We are all susceptible to think we are 9 ft tall and bulletproof****We may believe Christ will come again****But we think it will not be today****And we can get confused that all we have to be concerned about  
is the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming****When Christ will return****But there will be a day each of us will face****When we come face to face with the Lord****There will be no hiding****Every word we have spoken****Every action we have done****Every action we did not do**

**Everything will be seen in the light of day**

**In the light of faith**

**A famous philosopher Soren Kierkegaard says this of faith:**

**Faith is a passion for the impossible**

**Surrender to a Mystery we cannot control**

**Abraham had faith**

**It brought him to a new land**

**Moses and the Israelites had faith**

**It led to freedom from over 400 years of physical bondage**

**In our Gospel**

**Jesus asks us if we have faith**

**Am I willing to surrender to the impossible?**

**Am I willing to surrender to the Mystery?**

**Am I willing to trust?**

**Am I willing to risk everything for a God not of this world?**

**To a God who cannot be controlled**

**When I stand before Jesus**

**My heart wide open**

**Am I prepared?**

**Do I believe?**

**Has my belief turned into action?**

**Has it turned into faith?**

**Is it lived in how I vote?**

**How I spend my time and money**

**Is it lived in my workplace, in my school, in my home?**

**Is it reflected in how I speak?**

**In faith we put our trust in God**

**And then live out our responsibilities**

**In faith we wait for the Lord**

**Not knowing how or when he will enter our lives**

**In faith we are prepared to offer the ultimate sacrifice**

**Not knowing if it will be asked of us**

**In faith we live this call of Christ:**

***Be not afraid***