



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I read the second reading today from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, I see myself so much in this category.:

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord." (I Cor 1:26-31)

As I consider the new calling God has for me as Dean (don't worry, I'm not leaving the parish), I feel unworthy, and, in many ways, ill-equipped. When I got the call from the Vicar General, I was shocked that they would even think of me as a candidate for dean. If you want, I can list all of my short-comings and weaknesses! My initial resistance to becoming dean was not the burden of more responsibility, more work, more need to ration my time more wisely – though all of these things did play a factor after I thought about it. My initial reaction, rather, was that I didn't have the skills for this.

When reading this passage from St. Paul, it reminds me that it is not a matter of whether I am well enough equipped, but only if I am open enough to God to allow Him to work in me. As the saying goes, He doesn't call the equipped, He equips those He calls. God can choose someone as foolish as I am, and still use me.

I have shared with a few people that several months ago, I began to feel that I was comfortable here at St. Patrick. I don't want you to think that I felt uncomfortable here before that. Rather, I began to think that I had reached a level of comfort here that made me nervous. Knowing that if we follow God, He only allows us to stay in our comfort zone for short periods, knowing that He wants to stretch us to make us holier, I began to wonder – with some trepidation – what else God had in store for me. My initial thought was that He might call me to another parish. I had no idea that being dean was what was in store for me.

But you see, we can trust God! Even when we know He doesn't always make us comfortable, we can trust God. Every time God has asked me to change, when I have answered in the affirmative, it has always come out beautifully. Oh, not always at first. Many times there have been heart-ache and tears shed, but when He stretches me, He always brings healing – deeper than I ever knew I needed.

All this is to say that we can trust Almighty God (remind me of this, please!). When we feel overwhelmed, when we feel unequipped, when we feel He chose the wrong person for the job, we need to remember that He chooses the foolish, the weak, the lowly, those who count for nothing to show His wisdom and power. So, let us, then, boast in the Lord!