

9th Wednesday of Ordinary Time. 6/2/2021

Their prayer was heard.

We hear today two stories about seven husbands.

In the time of Jesus, there were two large Jewish sects: the Pharisees believed in the resurrection at the end of times, while the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. In the Gospel today, the Sadducees sketch for Jesus a story:

There was a woman who ended up lawfully marrying seven brothers who died one after the other. In the resurrection, which of those seven will be her husband?

We can picture the self-satisfaction of the Sadducees, with their very clever argument to show that the resurrection is an absurd idea.

We also hear about seven husbands in the first reading.

This time in the sorrow of a girl who has been given in marriage seven times, but her husbands have been killed before their marriage was consummated. Her name is Sarah, the only child of Raguel. She is innocent, yet the servants accuse her of murdering her bridegrooms.

Everybody in town knows what has been happening and there is no end to the gossip. We hear about her tears and her sadness. We also hear about her love for her dad, and how she doesn't want to cause him any sorrow.

How different the two stories of seven husbands, a hypothetical argument to convince someone of my point of view, and the lived human experience of a painful situation. And how different the attitude and the relationship with God. Am I self-sufficient in my reason, or

am I totally dependent on a God who loves me but is beyond my comprehension?

Sarah, in her despair, turns to God in prayer, in complete surrender, not understanding, not blaming, but acknowledging the greatness and mercy of God, and asking him to relieve her from her suffering. God heard the prayer of Sarah, and also the prayer of Tobit. God sent Raphael, his angel, to heal them. They were not healed immediately, but a plan was set in motion to restore each of them and make them whole.

We run into painful situations in our lives. Situations that we don't understand, that are beyond our ability to control or to fix. But God is with us. He hears our prayers,

and his plan is to restore us and make us whole, and to give us abundant life.

In this Mass, we bring to Christ in humility anything that causes grief in our hearts and the hearts of our brothers and sisters, and we ask him for his healing presence in the difficult situations in our lives.