



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – 22nd Sunday of the Year 2017

This morning we're going to reflect upon the conversation between Jesus and Peter in our Gospel story, but before we do: two prefaces. The first preface might seem humorous but honestly, it's serious. When I read this it helped me, so I share it with you. Between the ages of 20 and 50, I worried endlessly what others thought of me. After 50, I suddenly realized that others thought of me hardly at all! For me those were words of wisdom! Our second preface; At Mass on Memorial Day weekend, I guaranteed that if every day, from Memorial Day to Labor day you heard God say to you: "I am with you," then you would have a happy summer. Today, allow me to suggest that we do that, not only during the summer, but every day. Try to hear God say to you: "I am with you." If you hear God say those golden words to you every day, I guarantee that you will experience peace in our life

no matter what is occurring in your life. Ok, now let's take a look at what is happening in the conversation between Jesus and Peter in our Gospel story. In our Gospel last Sunday, Jesus called Peter the ROCK and referred to him as the foundation upon which Jesus would build his church. In our Gospel today, Jesus calls Peter SATAN and refers to him as an obstacle. Last Sunday, what Jesus said to Peter are perhaps the most affirming words that Jesus said to anyone. This Sunday, what Jesus says to Peter are perhaps the harshest words that Jesus said to anyone. Why the sudden switch? What happened to poor Peter? It seems to me, Peter fell from favor because he would not accept the fact that Jesus had to suffer; that suffering is part of our Father's Plan – Upper case, Capital P: it is for Jesus and it is for us. Jesus had to carry his cross, each of us has to carry our cross. Suffering comes in different forms, suffering comes in different times – but suffering comes... to ALL of us. So, suffering is part of God's plan for us. Why? Why do you think God allows us to suffer? Could we take a moment please so each of us could ask ourselves: "Why does God allow suffering?" (PAUSE) One thing we know for sure about suffering: When we suffer it is NOT getting back at us because of our sins. That is NOT who God is! Jesus suffered and he never sinned. Mary suffered and she never sinned. Why does God allow suffering? Maybe we won't have an answer to that agonizing question until we reach heaven. But allow me, please, to share with you three theories as to why God might allow suffering. Perhaps God allows us to suffer because suffering can bring us closer to God. Holy people down through the centuries including right up until now and right here in our parish tell us that the times

they felt closest to God were the times when they were suffering. Perhaps God allows us to suffer so that we will long more for heaven. In heaven there is no suffering, no pain, no sorrow, no tears, but only joy and peace for ever and ever – endless ecstasy. St. Paul tells us “the sufferings of the present are as nothing when compared to the glory to be revealed to us.” Perhaps God allows us to suffer so that we might be more compassionate to the sufferings of others. We know what they’re going through. So hopefully we might be more eager to try to alleviate their sufferings. Whatever times you suffer, whatever causes you to suffer, when you suffer, try to hear God say to you: “I am with you!”