

**Seek the Truth**    Fifth Week of Lent    Monday, April 8, 2019    **Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62;**    Jn 8:12-20    (We are obliged to have evidence for our judgments in matters of faith, in matters of morals, in matters of politics, in matters of economics, in all matters.)

**“He stood in their midst and continued, ‘Are you such fools, O children of Israel! To condemn a woman of Israel without examination and without clear evidence?’”**

So today’s story from the Book of Daniel is a wisdom novella, and it is teaching about condemnation; in fact it is Nicodemus who will quote the same idea, the same concept, as Daniel here when it comes to Jesus. “Since when,” Nicodemus said, “do we condemn a man before we have heard the evidence?” **So this is about our listening to other people, and how dangerous it is to believe without examination.**

What the story of Susanna is trying to get across is that **we should be very careful about what we believe.** And that is something that must be said to a community of faith, because **a community of faith is grounded in the belief in divine revelation, in the disclosure of God, but the disclosure of God is one thing. Everything that goes on within the community of faith is not the disclosure of God.** And faith is not being gullible. Faith is not just believing whatever you hear. That’s what this story is about; **you must not believe whatever you hear. You have to have evidence, even evidence of divine revelation.**

Now for us **the Holy Scriptures are considered evidence in the teaching of Christ.** For that matter, it’s considered evidence in the teaching of Moses, but we do not necessarily believe in Moses; we believe in Christ. The point is **we have to be very sure that what we believe really is from Christ, and not just something someone made up.** And people are always fabricating—always fabricating. It is unfortunately something human beings can’t stop doing.

Now as we apply this to our life in our community of faith, **we also have to apply this within our life in the world,** even more so. **The world is full of fabrications:** all kinds of people, maybe

even sincere, maybe, maybe sincerely expressing what they believe to be true, but is it? Again, **sincerity in a speaker is not evidence of truth.** So as we go about our lives, first of all our lives of faith, but also our lives of service in the world, **we have be very careful in what we believe.**

**And the sorts of topics that circulate among people, person to person, rumors, stories, and what not, are for the most part completely unreliable.** And when we put credence in them, we do ourselves a great disservice and we harm others. When we believe in slander, we are participating in slander, even if we don't tell anyone else, even if we don't spread the slander, we are still participating in it by believing it. And the same goes with all reports. **We are obliged to seek the truth,** which means it is not obvious. **We are obliged to have evidence for our judgments in matters of faith, in matters of morals, in matters of politics, in matters of economics, in all matters.** We are obliged to find the truth. We can't draw a line in the sand and say well this area doesn't matter. No, everything matters to God. If we are to be his servants, and if we are to live as his children, we have to care about the truth.