

...that you may not grow weary and lose heart...2nd READING

I REMEMBER VISITING THE RUINS OF EPHESUS in Asia Minor, where Saint Paul lived and walked. I actually saw carved upon a stone: "NIKE!"

The structure most intact there is the ancient amphitheater. I could picture him sitting in the stands watching the runners compete in the ancient games.

No wonder he was fond of the image of a race.

So he could write in today's 2nd Reading: "We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses." The amphitheater probably seated 20,000 witnesses.

And he exhorts us "to persevere in running the race before us..."and then he urges us "that you may not grow weary and lose heart..."

This week at the Olympics we watched the swimmers and today the boat crews straining toward the finish lines.

Saint Paul's words took on extra meaning.

"do not lose heart..."

And I am reminded of Nancy in Omaha battling a terminal illness, and never losing heart.

For a long time she was a faithful reader of this site.

There are so many courageous people like Nancy all around us.

They strain toward the finish line, and never lose heart.

□ And□ in today's Gospel, Jesus tells us "I have come to cast fire upon the earth!"

We talk about athletes being "fired up" They must be to get their competitive juices flowing.

Jesus disdained the "lukewarm."

So we must get "warmed up" to run the race!

And blessed are those who strain toward the finish line,

and never lose heart!

And so we pray:

God bless those who like Nancy,

struggle against great odds,

20th Sunday, Ordinary Time

Written by Fr. Fitz

Thursday, 11 August 2016 15:49

who never complain,

and who never lose heart.

Amen