
Youth Sunday Sermon – Edith Baños

A sermon by Edith Baños
Youth Sunday – The Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year B

Good morning! My name is Edith Banos, I plan to attend Kennesaw State University, as a Nursing major. I have been coming to the Cathedral of St. Philip my whole life. When I was offered this opportunity to speak today, I was a little nervous, but thrilled. I would like to share a little bit about me and how my journey started.

I remember being in my PE class in kindergarten, terrified of doing a simple exercise called rundowns. We had to line up in groups of 5 and run from one side of the gym to the other, tagging the next person in line relay style. When everyone had gone, the first group to sit down, indicating they were finished, would be declared the winner. The rundown relay race was what I dreaded the most when I went to school. I always made sure to be the last person who ran. If that wasn't possible, I would trade places with the person who was after me, hoping that my PE Coach wouldn't realize. But on days when I wasn't so lucky, and it was my turn to run, I could feel my heart beating at 100 miles per hour, my palms getting sweaty, and my face turning ripe red. When my teammate would be running back towards me, I would run to the coach and tell them "I can't do it". I would be told to sit against the wall and was given a "pink slip", which was a referral that I had to bring back signed by my parents, and a phone call home. When I was picked up from school, my mom was ready to hear what wonderful excuse I had this time. I feared not fitting in with the rest of my class, afraid I would look silly running back and forth, or simply not being fast enough. After listening to today's Gospel and listening to the way Jesus prayed for his disciples, he said, "the world has hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world." Even at such a young age, I was afraid of not belonging. The two cones that marked the start and finish point of the relay race seemed 1000 feet away, when they were only about 20 feet apart. Everything seemed impossible. I was quickly proved wrong; nothing is ever impossible. Something is only impossible until its done. My mom had probably gotten tired of having to sign so many pink slips, and answer so many phone calls, that one day, on a day we had to do rundowns, she decided to come down to the school and run alongside me. She didn't wait for me on the other side of the gym, she ran right next to me, with my hand gripping hers in fear. That day, my mom helped me make the impossible possible. She helped me get over the fear of judgement and helped me gain confidence in every stride I took with my hand in hers. When I think about that day, I think about how God works in a similar way. He isn't waiting on the other side watching me fear the evil of the world, he is at my side, running through every obstacle with me. He was by my side as I transitioned from elementary school to middle school, and from middle school to high school. God gave us free will, and with that free will, you can choose to take Him by the hand and let His word guide you through light and darkness, or you can choose not to. But despite what choice you make, God remains by your side. As I am getting ready to graduate high school, and begin college, I choose to take him by the hand and walk down this new chapter of my life, confiding in him, and trusting that the way Jesus prayed for us, is the way god will care for me. "Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

AMEN.