



Come and See!

Week of January 17, 2021

The Word...

Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.
Sacrifice or offering you wished not,
but ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not; then said I, "Behold I come."
In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
to do your will, O my God, is my delight, and your law is within my heart!"
I announced your justice in the vast assembly;
I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.
(from Ps 40)

Pondering the Word ... "

"I announced your justice...I did not restrain my lips..."

The events of January 6, 2021 in the United States have left people all over the world shocked but not surprised. We have let the lies and vitriol go unchecked. We have restrained our lips, derelict in our duty to hold people in power accountable. Let us remember the words attributed to Edmund Burke: *"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing."*

But there is grace. The happenings of that day, the deaths and threats that resulted from an insurrectionist mob have laid bare gross deficiencies and injustice in our government and policing systems, the tyranny of the privileged, and the darkness in the hearts of those who instigate and perpetrate such abominations. With hope, this will finally be a wake-up call for all good men and women to realize that we can no longer tolerate power-driven, seditious leadership for the sake of one issue or to satisfy our greed.

I remind you of the words of Mary's Magnificat that we joyously recited not a month ago: *"He has dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly..."* These words did not apply just to Herod or Pontius Pilate or Caesar, or even to hypocritical Jewish elders in Jesus' day. They apply to our world today...and the world is watching.

Living the Word...

It is beyond time for Christians to put aside their political platforms and take up the gospel; to stop restraining our lips and to announce God's justice in the world **by calling out and taking concrete nonviolent action against treason and injustice**. I am reminded of a good parenting lesson: to tolerate is to teach. We have tolerated far too much for far too long. What lessons are we teaching our children about responsibility and accountability if we sit on our couches and do nothing, or if we let those who incited the mob go free because of their privileged positions. *"(The zeal of Christian) love does not mean accepting breaches of justice 'for the sake of peace.'"* (Jürgen Moltmann) No accountability, no healing...no truth, no reconciliation...no justice, no peace. Do something.

Personal Reflections and Ideas...

Mon, Jan 18: "...he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him." (Heb 5:1-10)

Have you ever struggled with something – an illness, a loss or disappointment -- and then finally given up, bitter and jaded? Instead, what if you took your struggle to God and said honestly, "Thy will be done." Resignation to God's will is giving up; it can prolong our misery and doesn't help us to heal. (Remember, there's a difference between *curing* and *healing*.) Acceptance of God's will is opening up; it is allowing our faith in God to take the soul-level burden from us. **Today's Provision: Acceptance.** What are you called to accept? These days, it can range from simply wearing a mask to accepting illness or death. Something important to note: in v. 7, we hear Jesus "offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears." Accepting God's will does not preclude us from turning to God in sorrow or anger. Don't be afraid to express to God what is in your heart. God already knows what's there.

Tues, Jan 19: "... hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner..." (Heb 6:10-20)

Interesting mixed metaphor. We normally don't think of an anchor associated with a veil. Anchors conjure up images of stormy seas and yet think about it in light of yesterday's reflection. That veil, that separation between our existence and where God exists could be thought of as God's will, and Lord knows, as we encounter the storms on our side of the veil, we must hold fast to the anchor we have in Christ. **Today's Provision: Hold fast to Jesus.** Through the Incarnation, Jesus is grounded on both sides of the veil, unmovable and secure. Hold him close to you today and every day, whether your seas be stormy or still.

Wed, Jan 20: "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil...?" (Mk 3:1-6)

Here's the question for us to consider: Would it have been "evil" for Jesus to ignore the man with the withered hand? Of course, in this case, Jesus is putting the law of the sabbath up against the law of love, but it makes me think: If I have the means to help someone who is suffering, and I don't help them for whatever reason -- even "the law" -- am I doing "evil?" **Today's Provision: Pay attention:** This is a tough one. Can you think of a situation where "the law" would keep you from helping someone in need? I can. How would you decide? It's important that we pay attention to those times when we choose to ignore rather than to reach out. (*We pray today for a peaceful transfer of power in the US and for brighter, more civilized days ahead. We pray for all world leaders.*)

Thurs, Jan 21: *He had cured many and those who had diseases were pressing upon him to touch him.* (Mk 3:7-12)

I wonder how many of the people Jesus cured continued to follow him, how many stayed at his side through the rest of his ministry and to his death. Heck, we know even his closest male friends abandoned him. I don't mean to sound jaded, but I can imagine that, just like today, people got what they needed from him and then hightailed it back home. Sure, their day-to-day lives might have changed, but how many hearts were changed? **Today's Provision: Stay by Jesus' side.** Each evening, do an examen of the day and look at how close you were to Jesus' side. Say thank you for his constant presence in your life and pray for the courage to stay by his side, no matter what tomorrow may hold.

Fri, Jan 15: "I will put my laws in their minds and I will write them upon their hearts." (Heb 8:6-13, from Jer 31)

A perfect passage for our theme of metanoia – a change of heart. We may know and be able to recite God's laws, but what really matters is how they take shape in our heart. (Look back to Wednesday's reflection for an illustration.) Is there room for God's law of love in your heart? **Today's Provision: Journal.** God says he will "write" the laws upon our hearts, so sit in prayer and ask God to help you transcribe. Reflect on a situation where you are challenged to live the law of love and ask for the Spirit's help.

Sat, Jan 16: "He is out of his mind." (Mk 3:20-21)

I read the words of Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* and *Let Us Dream*. I read the criticisms that what he presents is not possible. I challenge you to find anything he says that is not what Christ said. Is he out of his mind? Are you willing to be out of your mind too? **Today's Provision: Live the law of love.** The Spirit is speaking to me. My heart is not very loving these days. Change can only happen if we change our hearts. Live in love today.