



Come and See!

Week of May 23, 2021 Pentecost

The Word...

“When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning. ... I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.”
(from Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15)

Pondering the Word ...

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.”

What do you think Jesus means here? How would you feel being one of the disciples who heard these words? One translation I use says, *“There are many things I still have to say to you, but you’re not yet strong enough to take them.”* I can see Peter and the Sons of Thunder, James and John, boasting, *“Have at it, Lord. We can take it!”*

Jesus has already told his disciples he will soon be leaving them. He has told them of the violent death he is to experience and that they will abandon him. He has even told them they too will be persecuted. And in John 15:15, he says he has already revealed to them everything he has heard from the Father. What might be left to tell that they cannot bear? And what is still left to tell that we may not be ready to accept?

Living the Word...

Jesus is telling his disciples, past and present, that the work is not done. It’s obvious from the get-go. It will take time, effort, the enlightenment of the Spirit of Wisdom -- and the loss of some disciples--to get the new community to accept Gentiles into the fold. Heck, look how long it took the Church to accept Galileo’s proof that the earth was not the center of the universe! I wonder how long it will take humanity to accept that we are not the center of the universe either!

Like our parents who knew when we were ready to cross the street by ourselves (despite our claims that we were ready at age two!), God, through the Spirit, prepares us -- individually and collectively -- to accept new insights and abilities. I used to wish that I had learned a long time ago what I know now about God, but it would not have benefited me in the same way that it has. I am thankful God reveals things on God’s time—*kairos* time.

We are living in a liminal space. *Kairos* time is upon us. The Spirit is revealing new things to us right now! Old ways of thinking are being challenged, conflicts are emerging between what is past and what is to be. There is dissension, even persecution. As individuals and as a society, we are being asked to come forward into a future that looks different from where we have been. It just may be that Jesus sees us as ready, that we are now strong enough. What do you think?

Personal Reflections and Ideas...

Mon, May 24: *"My home is within you."* (Ps 87)

The Monday after Pentecost is celebrated as "Whit Monday" in the Eastern Orthodox Church; of as 2018, Catholics dedicate the day to Mary, Mother of the Church. It's also the beginning of a long stretch of "ordinary time." But when we think of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, how can any day be anything but extraordinary! **For reflection today:** *Contemplate the image of the Holy Spirit dwelling within your soul. Provision for today:* *Consider if any of the décor in your soul needs remodeling. Ask the Spirit for design help!*

Tues, May 25: *"To refrain from evil pleases the LORD, and to avoid injustice is an atonement."* (Sir 35:1-12)

What does it mean to avoid injustice? I may say I would never treat someone unjustly, but then how do I justify the things I do (or don't do) every day that feed injustice? Am I even aware of the unjust things I do like wasting water and abusing the environment, or participating in systems and institutions that promote discrimination and poverty? And if I am aware, then do I stay and try change these systems or abandon them?

For reflection today: *Pray to the Spirit for enlightenment that you will recognize things in your life that are unjust.*

Provision for today: *If you are aware of your participation in an unjust system, discern how you can facilitate change.*

Wed, May 26: *"Give new signs and work new wonders."* (Sir 36: 1, 4-5a, 10-17)

It's been 250 years since a prophet has emerged in Israel. Ben Sira offers a prayer not unlike the prayers we say: "Give us a sign. Show the world your majesty and reward those who have kept their hope and trust in you." I imagine we, like the ancients, miss hundreds of wonders God works every day because we have specific ideas about what we consider a "sign." **For reflection today:** *When was the last time, if ever, that you can say you experienced a "sign from God?"* **Provision for today:** *Put aside your preconceived notions of what God's presence is supposed to look like. Open your eyes and your heart today and look for God's wonders.*

Thurs, May 27: *Bartimaeus began to cry out, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." ...He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus.* (Mk 10:46-52)

Bartimaeus has likely been a quiet presence outside of Jericho, his cloak hiding his shame, speaking up only to beg. He hears that Jesus is near and he puts aside his shame, comes out from hiding, and is healed. **For reflection today:** *What do you use to hide your shame or fear?* **Provision for today:** *Jesus is near. Don't be afraid to cry out to him, to make yourself and your needs known to him. Don't let others discourage you from seeking him.*

Fri, May 28: *"When you stand to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance, so that your heavenly Father may in turn forgive you your transgressions."* (Mk 11:11-26)

How many of us do this...really? I was in a spiritual direction group several years ago where this very activity was suggested. I thought for a while and was happy to report there was no one with whom I had an active grievance. But past grievances? I took time to pray to the Spirit and yes, there was some bitterness from my past that needed attention. **For reflection today:** *Do you have hurts from the past that need the healing touch of forgiveness? Do you feel anger or even hatred towards individuals or groups of people right now?* **Provision for today:** *Once you have reflected, pick one person (or group) to forgive. Make it one that is not too difficult. Stand and say the person (or group's) name aloud with the words, "I forgive you." Ask the Spirit to help you say it from your heart. Do this each day until you feel the burden of that bitterness lifting. Then go on the next, more challenging ones.*

Sat, May 29: *"When I was young and innocent, I sought wisdom in my prayer."* (Sir 51:12-20)

This verse reminds me of Jesus' words: *"Be as shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves."* (Mt 10:16) We tend to think of innocence as naivete or lacking in wisdom; shrewdness as being world-wise and in the case of serpents, cunning and dangerous. Jesus tells us to be wise to the traps the world sets for us, but to do so in a nonjudgmental, loving, and gentle way. In Ignatian Spirituality, a modern take on finding God in all things is called "the Ignatian Plus Sign." We assume the good intention of the person or situation presenting itself, but in a way that is also aware. We don't judge the other, but make good judgments for ourselves. **For reflection today:** *Do you find that your world wisdom is making you suspicious, bitter, or judgmental?* **Provision for today:** *If there is someone or some situation that makes you leery, pay attention to why that is. Your intuition may be right but it could also be unfounded fear that leads you away from a lesson Wisdom wants to teach. Be gentle with yourself and others. Be open to seek Wisdom in prayer.*