



# Come and See!

May 27, 2018

## The Word...

The eleven disciples went to Galilee,  
to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.  
When they all saw him, they worshipped, but they doubted.  
Then Jesus approached and said to them,  
"All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.  
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...  
And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."  
*(from Mt 28:16-20)*

## Pondering the Word... *"They worshipped, but they doubted."*

I've always wondered about this strange line from Matthew's Gospel. Some translations read, "They worshipped, but *some* doubted." I did a little research and came across this amusing excerpt from Dr. Mark Allen Powell book, *Loving Jesus*:

... The word *some* is not actually found in the Greek Bible. Why is it in the English version? ...I asked a Bible translator one time and got the following response: "The verse wouldn't make sense otherwise. No one can worship and doubt at the same time." I invited this fellow to visit a Lutheran church. We do it all the time. [p. 121]

Jesus knew the Apostles doubted. It's no surprise. All that had happened since his Resurrection was so far outside the realm of human understanding. Jesus knew of their doubts, and he commissioned them anyway; in fact, it just might have been their willingness to worship despite their doubts that turned out to be the best testament to their faith!

Another Scripture scholar and professor, M. Eugene Boring, writes about this same verse:

"Whatever the nature of the Resurrection event, it did not generate perfect faith even in those who experienced it firsthand. It is not to angels or perfect believers, but to the worshipping/wavering community of disciples to whom the world mission is entrusted."

Note Dr. Boring uses the present tense: it is to us—a 'wavering, but still willing to worship' community of believers—that is entrusted Christ's mission of evangelization! What an honor to join the imperfect ranks of the first disciples in this awesome task!

## Living the Word...

Faith is "a firm belief in something for which there is no proof." It seems to me, as light is often defined in relation to darkness, faith can be similarly defined in relation to doubt. Abraham doubted, Moses doubted, Mary doubted, Joseph doubted, but they all followed God's will anyway. And for that, we hold them in the highest esteem. If you find yourself in the throes of doubt at times, take heart. Turn to the communion of saints who accompany us on our earthly journey and ask them to strengthen you so you can worship and follow despite your doubts. Never forget: They, along with Jesus, are with you always, until the end of the age.

Personal Reflections and Ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

**May 28:** *"It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God."* (Mk 10:17-27)

*"When it comes to putting broken lives back together... the human best tends to be at odds with the holy best. To do for yourself--to grit your teeth and clench your fists—is, by that very act, to be unable to let something be done for you and in you. The trouble with steeling yourself against the harshness of reality is that that same steel also...secures your life against being opened up and transformed by holy power. You can survive on your own. You can grow strong on your own. You can even prevail on your own. But you cannot become human on your own. Surely that is why, in Jesus' sad joke, the rich man has as hard a time getting into Paradise as that camel through the needle's eye because, with his credit card in his pocket, he is so effective at getting for himself everything he needs that he does not see that what he needs more than anything else can be had only as a gift. He does not see that the one thing a clenched fist cannot do is accept, even from 'le bon Dieu' himself, a helping hand."* (Adapted from *The Sacred Journey*, by Frederick Buechner)

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**May 29:** *"Be holy in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, 'Be holy because I am holy.'"* (1 Pt 1:10-16)

Pope Francis' most recent exhortation is exactly this: A universal call to holiness. We may have preconceived images of what "holy" looks like, and have a hard time seeing how we, as people who work and live in the "real world," could ever be considered holy. The Pope dispels these images: *"the important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path...to take up your role as salt of the earth and light of the world wherever you find yourselves."* He prays for us: *"May you come to realize... the message of Jesus that God want to speak to the world by your life."* I urge all people of good will to read "Gaudete et Exultate." It is wisdom and encouragement, an antidote for an ailing world in desperate need of holiness.

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**May 30:** *"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you."* (Mk 10:32-45)

You gotta hand it to James and John--at least they're honest! I like that they are comfortable enough with Jesus to address him so directly. And Jesus answers them directly. Perhaps we could learn something here. When you pray, approach Jesus as a friend. Be honest and direct. Then be open. Listen for his answer.

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**May 31:** *"Brothers and sisters: Let love be sincere... anticipate one another in showing honor."* (Rom 12:9-16)

In the Catholic tradition, today is the Feast of the Visitation. Mary, newly pregnant, learns of Elizabeth's pregnancy, and travels "in haste" to support her cousin. She anticipates and honors Elizabeth's needs. I love Paul's words here, to "anticipate one another." I can find myself on autopilot some days, unaware of others. How can I anticipate another's needs when I fail to even recognize them? Today, let's see if we can be a little like Mary. Look around. Take time to learn another's story. Anticipate their needs and honor them, loving them sincerely. (And remember, the other's need is often not for your words or actions--just your presence.)

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**Jun 1:** *Seeing from a distance a fig tree in leaf, he went over to see if he could find anything on it...And he said to it in reply, "May no one ever eat of your fruit again!"* (Mk 11:11-26)

Jesus is in a bad mood, but can you blame him? He has entered Jerusalem for the final time. He has looked around the temple grounds and seen the buying and selling. Like the fig tree in leaf, Jerusalem gives the appearance of religious fervor, but at closer inspection, it has no fruit to offer. It is all a façade. The fig tree is a metaphor. While it is fine to appear holy and pious, if we have no fruit to show for it, we are doomed to wither away. Let's make sure our faith is not a façade, but brings forth good fruit for God's Kingdom.

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**Jun 2:** *"On those who waver, have mercy; save others by snatching them out of the fire; on others have mercy with fear, abhorring even the outer garment stained by the flesh."* (Jude: 17, 20b-25)

Jude is both advising and cautioning the new Christian communities about false prophets and those within their communities that have fallen away. There are some who just need gentle mercy to lead them back to Christ; others may need a stronger hand. In either case, it is imperative that those in the role of helping others strengthen themselves, lest they fall into sin as well. It's important we not succumb to pride. We are sinners, not saviors. There is only one who can save souls. But we can reflect God's love and mercy, inviting the other to seek that mercy for themselves.