



Come and See!

October 1, 2017

The Word...

Remember that your compassion, O LORD,
and your love are from of old.
The sins of my youth and my frailties remember not;
in your kindness remember me,
because of your goodness, O LORD.
(from Ps 25)

Pondering the Word...

"In your kindness, Lord, remember me" ...Remember me, the soul you created for and from love. Remember this child you formed in your image. Remember my true self, not this façade that the trials and temptations of life and my sins and frailties have layered upon me. In your goodness and compassion, Lord, lead me today to seek your mercy, to peel away all that keeps me from feeling the warmth of your love deep in my heart. In your kindness, Lord, remember me.

*"To say that I am made in the image of God
is to say that love is the reason for my existence, for God is love.*

Love is my true identity. Selflessness is my true self. Love is my true character. Love is my name.

*If, therefore, I do anything or think anything or say anything or know anything that is not purely for the love of God,
it cannot give me peace, or rest, or fulfillment, or joy.*

To find love I must enter into the sanctuary where it is hidden, which is the mystery of God."

(Thomas Merton, from *New Seeds of Contemplation*)

Living the Word...

In Paul's Letter to the Philippians, he entreats us: *"Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus."*

Reflect today on what it means for you to have "the attitude of Christ." What does it mean that love is your true identity? Does it involve always looking back at sins and mistakes? (Read the last line in this Wednesday's gospel!) Or does it live and look forward in hope? So many of us waste time rehashing the past or being so preoccupied about the future that we miss basking in the love God has for us today.

Let go of the "what ifs" of the past and future and instead focus on the "what is:" God's goodness and compassion given to us in the person of Jesus. Allow your true self to reflect the loving attitude of Christ.

Personal Reflections and Ideas: _____

Oct 2: *“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.”* (Mt 18:1-5, 10-14)

In the Old Testament, angels are always referred to as God’s angels. In this passage, Jesus uses the possessive “their” angels when he talks about the children. The Greek translation bears this out. He tells us the children’s angels always look upon God’s face, emphasizing God’s closeness to the “little ones” — children and those viewed by society as lesser, unimportant. Let’s remember that the next time we dismiss a little one or someone in need. And maybe we’re all grown up and have grown past the idea of a special presence watching over us. Let’s reacquaint ourselves our very own angel, given to us by God.

Oct 3: *“Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?” Jesus rebuked them.* (Lk 9:51-56)

With all the news of nuclear proliferation and potential attacks, we may want to reflect on this passage from Luke. The “sons of thunder,” James and John, are more than ready to nuke the Samaritan village that stands in their way. And of course, they imagine their way to be Jesus’ way as well. Jesus scolds them and heads off in another direction. Jesus’ way is never the way of violence, so much so that he chooses to take violence upon his own body instead. There is a lot of thundering and fire and fury emanating from a few world leaders today. In what direction would Jesus have us go?

Oct 4: *(Jesus) said, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, let me go first and bury my father.” And another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home.”* (Lk 9:57-62)

I call this passage “the gospel of excuses,” because I know how often I come up with stall tactics to postpone following Christ. The excuses offered here are nowhere near as frivolous as some I’ve given! Caring for parents is mandated by the commandments. Saying farewell is just common courtesy. Jesus’ words, “Let the dead bury the dead” sounds harsh, but his point is this: we can and will always be able to find an excuse—even good and noble ones—to put off or avoid all together his call to discipleship. That’s why prayer and discernment are so important so that we can talk with Jesus about his call to us. It’s likely our call isn’t a great dramatic change, but a call to continue right where we are with a new perspective, a new attitude, a new awareness to the needs right in front of us. Jesus asks us to follow him. How are you called?

Oct 5: *“The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul; the LORD’s command is clear, enlightening the eye.”* (Ps 19)

Today’s psalm is a good follow-up to yesterday’s reflection. While I believe the commands of the Lord are clear, why is it that many of us have such divergent interpretations of these commands? How can it be that I practice the same faith and yet have such a different view from one sitting next to me in the pew? How do I discern God’s will for me and for the world? I go back to the first line of this psalm: does what I believe, think, and feel about a particular issue refresh my soul? Am I at peace in my heart? St. Ignatius, in his rules for discernment, tells us we always choose between two goods. That would tell me that choosing between the lesser of two evils shouldn’t even enter the picture. The next time you are faced with an ethical decision, ask yourself, “Which option refreshes my soul?” If the answer is neither, ask God to help you identify a different approach, a different path that leads to a heartfelt peace.

Oct 6: *“We have neither heeded the voice of the Lord, our God, nor followed the precepts which the Lord set before us... we have been disobedient to the Lord, our God, and only too ready to disregard his voice.* (Bar 1: 15-22)

The Israelites are again lamenting their sinfulness, but at least they’re willing to place the blame where it belongs. Admitting we are wrong is more than half the battle. When followed by sincere prayer for mercy, the Lord happily forgives us and strengthens us to avoid sin in the future. Let’s take a good look at our lives and our souls today. Are we heeding God’s voice? “

Oct 7: *“Don’t rejoice because spirits are subject to you, but because your names are written in heaven.”* (Lk 10-17-24)

Can you imagine how James and John must be going on about all the sick they’ve cured, all the demons they’ve banished! Jesus reminds them it’s not about them. It’s all about God working through them. A good thing to remind ourselves as we go about ministering in God’s Kingdom.