

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Oct 16th 2013

Today there are two choices for remembrance at Mass: St. Hedwig and St. Margaret Mary Alocoque. Both are colorful women of the Church: one from the thirteenth century, the other, from the seventeenth.

St. Hedwig married at age 12, had seven children, and then with her husband, a prince, embarked on founding monasteries. The latter half of her life she spent in austerity, with the poor and prisoners.

St. Margaret Mary, in whose name is a well-known Omaha parish, is from France. She is known for visions that at first were disbelieved, but later were accepted. In fact, today she receives credit for having begun the worship of the Sacred Heart.

In the First Reading from Romans, St. Paul shows little patience for those of us who discount God's mercy and our need for it, especially when we find fault with others while doing the same or worse things ourselves. Examples of this come all too easily to mind these days when so many of us live in abject poverty around the world and are often blamed for our situation. At the same time, folks who benefit excessively from systems that are at the heart of the vast mis-distribution of wealth that exists today are some of the loudest detractors of people in poverty. (My opinion, but shared by many.)

How refreshing then to be presented by our new Pope who when recently asked "Who are you?" answered spontaneously and sincerely: "I am a sinner."

But not just any kind of sinner, a "redeemed sinner," who assesses the reality of his life and has found the need for God at his core, where sin could be hidden and left to fester, yet the Pope has invited us and offered himself to the mercy of God, in which he stores his wealth.

What would it mean in our lives if we were to become attentive to our need to "store" the mercy of God for our rainy days?

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