

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Oct 21st 2014

Today we hear about waiting, something we don't often hear or like to hear in our fast-paced, twenty-first century lives. We are so used to instant gratification today in our communication with family and friends, in the news we read, and in finding the answer to any question we might have. Most of the time, we want answers and we want them now!

But Luke's Gospel today tells us we have to adopt an attitude of waiting and patience instead, for we know not when the master will return. We are asked to be ready and vigilant; in other words, to have patience and to be aware.

Oh no! Talk about an anathema for the modern world! Not only are we denied instant answers to all the questions we might have about the course of our own future, but when we take a step back and realize that those answers are not forthcoming immediately, we are also confronted with some uncomfortable truths about the reality of our existence. I often feel like all the devices, gadgets, and inventions that we interact with on a daily basis serve largely to help us escape our own inner life, our relationship with God, and the fact that we are limited creatures living a finite existence.

Luckily for us, though, we aren't just wandering around blindly and constantly in fear of what lies before us. God has given us a taste of the goodness, love, and compassion that awaits us. In the part of the Letter to the Ephesians that we read today, we are told that we are no longer strangers and sojourners, but instead have been pulled into God's household. The letter is talking about Jews and Gentiles being brought together in Christ, but can't the same be said about God generally? The Word became flesh and then the Holy Spirit was sent among us on Pentecost, so God has already initiated the process of tearing down the walls that keep us apart and bringing us into God's dwelling place. This process may not be completed during our earthly existence, but even the taste of it that we have been given can powerfully impact our lives and help us live in the tension of our incompleteness.

Where have I experienced God recently? What have been moments of joy and consolation in my life, moments that provide light and inspiration despite the unknown and unanswerable that lies ahead? When have I felt the care and support of others, even if it comes in some of life's most challenging moments? If we ask these questions and look for the answers, then we just might hear the echo of the master's footsteps, in the here and now.

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