

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Nov 17th 2014

As I write this, the United States of America has just completed mid-term elections. Reflecting on the readings of the day, I think the first reading has good advice for politicians who have held office for a time. You have lost the love you had at first. Realize how far you have fallen. Repent and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Isn't it important that those who are blessed to hold esteemed positions remember how and why they are in the position? Did they once have strong aspirations, and convictions? Have they compromised those convictions in the name of political gain? How do we compromise our personal convictions in the name of comfort, or ease?

The responsorial psalm for today: Those who are victorious I will feed from the tree of life.

Wouldn't the world be a better place if everybody avoided the counsel of the wicked, and delighted in the law of the Lord—meditating upon this law day and night? If only it were easy to avoid all outside distractions and temptations and keep the law of the Lord as our center. Think about this for a moment, and meditate on how things might look if we all thought about the Law of the Lord in our everyday actions. Really think about it.

Now imagine the story Luke tells us today. There was a blind man who was begging for help from Jesus. Those around him rebuked him over and over again. The people were all over this man, trying to get him to be quiet while they went along praising the Lord, and likely trying to get Jesus to take note of their presence. The blind man continued to humbly yell for Jesus to help him. Do we see the dichotomy here? Jesus 'fans' are all over Jesus, wanting to get his attention. They were angry with the blind man, 'rebuking him'—not very Christ like. A poor blind man felt so called to meet Jesus, and even having the courage to ask for sight. Jesus told him, "have sight, your faith has saved you." He was granted sight and immediately gave glory to God. These folks, who were trying to quiet this man, suddenly gave praise to God. How often do we lose faith? Does it take somebody like the blind man to show us the way? Pray that we may always be humble in our realization of the unconditional love God has for us. Never let us take this for granted.

Certainly these readings are very appropriate for today is the memorial of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. In her short life, Elizabeth manifested such great love for the poor and suffering that she has become the patroness of Catholic charities and of the Secular Franciscan Order. The daughter of the King of

Hungary, Elizabeth chose a life of penance and simplicity when a life of leisure and luxury could easily have been hers. This choice endeared her in the hearts of the common people throughout Europe. I'm sure Elizabeth's heart would have gone out to our friend, the blind man.

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