

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Apr 14th 2015

“There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the Apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.” Acts 4:34-35

Today’s Acts of the Apostles reading has come at a very timely period in my life. I am in the process of writing a paper for the completion of my master’s in theology degree. I am struggling with many of the issues surrounding what could a Christian response look like as it pertains to prenatal care for undocumented pregnant women. While Nebraska is a state that currently provides access for undocumented pregnant women to prenatal care, this law continues to be challenged. As I read and re-read Acts 2:43-47 and took this passage to prayer, my question has been what is different from this early Christian community to our present day Christian community?

During my research for the theology paper I am writing I came across a journal article written by Daniel G. Groody, C.S.C., an assistant professor of theology and director of the Center for Latino Spirituality and Culture at the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He tells us how many of the immigrants, before they depart for the treacherous journey to the United States, “participate in a Eucharistic celebration and pray for help, guidance, and safety.” [Daniel G. Groody, C.S.C., Jesus and the Undocumented Immigrant: A Spiritual Geography of a Crucified People, Theological Studies 70(2009), pg. 302] The Eucharistic celebration celebrated before their departure is the same Eucharistic celebration many of us celebrate weekly and sometimes daily. It is the same Eucharistic celebration experienced by the earliest Christian community.

Paragraph 950 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church reads:

Communion of the sacraments. "The fruit of all the sacraments belongs to all the faithful. All the sacraments are sacred links uniting the faithful with one another and binding them to Jesus Christ, and above all Baptism, the gate by which we enter into the Church. The communion of saints must be understood as the communion of the sacraments. .. The name 'communion' can be applied to all of them, for they unite us to God. .. But this name is better suited to the Eucharist than to any other, because it is primarily the Eucharist that brings this communion about."483

The sacraments are sacred links uniting the faithful and ultimately they unite us to God. WOW! It is my opinion that the attraction of Pope Francis is because he is such a powerful role model of the early Christian community that we read about today in the Acts of the Apostles. He resonates with many of

us as we are attracted to his genuineness. He is a wonderful witness of unselfishness. My prayer for myself and our present day Christian community is to become more open to the grace of the sacraments and the transformation power to become more like the early Christian community.

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