

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Jul 26th 2015

I recently attended my high school reunion. Surprisingly enough one of my classmates was very intrigued about my conversion which led me to Catholicism. He kept asking me for more details and wanted to know what my experience had been. I provided him with brief responses and want to take this opportunity for a more in depth response. To be honest, it had been a while since I reflected back on that time in my life.

Since that extremely hot and humid evening, I have been flooded with memories from that time and today's readings have been helpful. In today's Gospel reading, I can relate to being part of the large crowd coming to Jesus. About 20 years ago, my relationship with Jesus became very important to me and I started attending various Bible studies.

After several years of Bible study, I felt a need to go in search of a church that would satisfy an emptiness I had started to experience. I took myself and my three small children to several churches in our area and became very excited with all the "on fire" feelings and emotions displayed for God.

There was one Sunday morning while sitting in a very comfy chair, eating a doughnut and listening to the word of God that a "trigger" point happened for me. It was announced that if you were interested in partaking of communion that you could come back later that evening. While I didn't know exactly what had happened internally to me at that time, I knew that this part of my search had come to an end.

I took my three small children and went back to our church and continued with life as it had been. The emptiness that I was not able to explain did not go away. I continued with Bible studies and eventually through the witness of friends who were Catholic, I started to ask them questions. It was their answers that caught my attention and I began to dig deeper. The deeper I went, the more aware I became of a conversion of my heart. This conversion ultimately took place because I was met by somebody. That somebody was our Lord, Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The emptiness I had experienced for several years went away.

It is God who creates something out of nothing. The Eucharist is prefigured in both 2 Kings 4:42-44 and John 6:1-15. For nearly two years after I became Catholic, I would sometimes cry when I received the Eucharist. This actually embarrassed me and it doesn't happen anymore but I look back on that time and think I had been given the gift of tears. I think this gift was a way God chose to bring me even closer to Him.

In today's readings, Paul urges us to live in the manner worthy of the call you have received. This was the call I received and I am always hopeful that my conversion experiences are conveyed with humility, gentleness and love.

The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. Psalm 145:17-18

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