

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Oct 27th 2015

Today's readings focus on hope and faith – two of my favorite words and concepts. When I hear of people questioning God's existence, I think how would I wake up each morning and put one foot in front of the other if I didn't think there was a God – a Savior of my soul. I can't imagine a day without relying on God who provides my hope and faith to look toward the future and to face the day-to-day challenges.

In the first reading, Paul reminds us that the sufferings of this world are limited to this world – that they pale in comparison to the glory that awaits us. There is great comfort in knowing/believing that what we endure will seem so small in the light of our rewards. We eagerly await in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. He mentions hope again later in the readings as he emphasizes that

For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

Hope has a certain mystery to it – a wistfulness that something will happen. I would not say "I hope to see you" when you are standing there in front of me. Rather, hope is looking forward with belief and conviction particularly as Christians. Hope is closely connected with trust. Christian hope is rooted in faith in the divine salvation in Christ as stated in Galatians.

The responsorial psalm echoes this hope and trust as the last refrain states

Although they go forth weeping,
carrying the seed to be sown,
They shall come back rejoicing,
carrying their sheaves.

Every seed that is planted is planted in the hope that it will grow – using the Biblical terminology it is planted in confident expectation. We expect that we will soon or later have something to reap.

In the Gospel, Jesus offers two analogies for the Kingdom of God. He speaks of the effect of yeast in flour to leaven bread and to dramatically increase its size. It is easy to see the effect when we leave rolls or bread in a warm environment usually letting the dough double in size or more. The Kingdom will expand us well beyond what we can even imagine. My favorite analogy is that of the mustard seed – one of the smallest seeds in nature yet the resultant bush/tree is very impressive. I remember as a young girl having a pendant that was a small clear ball with a little mustard seed in it. I'm not sure if there was a paper with it or something my mother told me but I clearly remember something like if ye have faith as a mustard seed nothing shall be impossible unto ye . . . That image of that little seed carefully encased in the glass and the idea of a very large tree has stuck with me throughout my life.

One last thought, I saw this quote on a collage of beautiful quotes and with my heart for music (especially that which praises), I immediately fell in love with it.

Hope is the ability to hear the music of the future. Faith is the courage to dance to it today.

So . . . listen and dance, dance, dance!!

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