

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Mar 7th 2016

Our readings today give me hope. They express a core belief of the Christian faith. This faith that is filled with hope is built on the foundation of the numerous visible examples of God's love for us. I noticed this thread throughout each of the readings.

In the first reading from Isaiah, God promises new things, things that will invoke a response of “rejoicing and happiness” without the “sound of weeping being heard.” In this description, life is in abundance in both quality and quantity. What an inspiring and hopeful promise from our loving Lord!

In the Gospel, Jesus acts with mercy and compassion. The royal official believed and had faith in Jesus and his son, who was near death, was cured of his illness. What a hopeful message to all those who suffer and mourn; our faith in God will save us!

Psalms 30 appropriately invites us to praise, a natural response of gratitude for the gifts given to us and for the mercy bestowed on us sinners.

What are the signs that we see from God on a regular basis on our own lives? For me, for many of us, the signs are all around us if we are aware of them. I think of my toddler daughter, who spontaneously announces “Mama, I love you SO much” or who shows tender care towards anyone who is sad or hurting by trying to cheer them up and giving hugs.

Our search for God, in all things, in our daily lives is worthwhile as the verse before the Gospel reassures us: “Seek good and not evil that you may live, and the Lord will be with you.” Are there times when we are caught in the trap of seeking evil, perhaps in such ways as giving in to some negative gossip, jumping into a situation in order to solely be divisive? I am guilty of not assuming the best intentions of someone in an annoying situation or of judging too quickly and I need to catch myself to reflect on whether I am indeed seeking good or seeking evil. Sometimes, I make excuses that I don't have enough time, when, in reality, if I really re-prioritized, I would have more time to build community and really listen to those around me. Oftentimes, it is a fine line and a quick, subtle trap. Sometimes, I try to handle problems on my own without offering them to God. Or, I find myself trusting in my own resources and abilities to solve a struggle instead of trusting in God.

Throughout today, I invite us to ask: how are we seeking the good, our God, in our regular daily, small interactions of our ordinary lives? When we seek God in situations and in others, we are lifted up and given life, instead of wilting away from the destructive, negative influences of the evil spirit. We are lifted up and reminded of the hope, that foundational piece of our faith, that belief that the Kingdom of God is here, is possible, and that wonderful things await us if we have the faith to believe.

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