

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jun 17th 2017

So whoever is in Christ is a new creation:

the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.

We are new. God didn't just create us once and leave us alone but as St. Ignatius says, we are being continuously created by God each day. Because we are baptized, Paul tells us today, if we live as Christians, with our lives centered in Jesus, "old things have passed away" and if we "behold" – pay attention – we see that new things have come.

The idea of always being created by God has helped me as my children have grown to adults, moved out of our home and into their own adult lives. It has supported me as I age, in my retirement and as I have worked through questions like "Who am I if not the mother to young children? Who am I if I don't go to work every day?"

When I am my best self and most in touch with God I can ask, "What new-ness am I being called to by God today?" Is it improving the lines of communication in my 41-year marriage? Can I make it better by holding my criticism or listening more closely? How can I be a better mother to my adult children, and (I add with joy) a better grandmother? How can I take the time I now have in retirement to make the world a better place?

We are all invited to ask God what new-ness we are called to today. Is it being less rigid as a person, more loving to our family? Perhaps we are being invited to look at the space in our heart where we hold anger and open up that spot by forgiving someone? This invitation to let old things pass away means we can change the way we have thought or dealt with people and remember that we are "new things."

It means relying on God's love and continuous creation of us to live our lives. In today's gospel Jesus tells us not to take false oaths and to "let your 'yes' mean 'yes' and your 'no' mean 'no.'" There have probably been times of desperation in our lives where we pray, "If my mother is healed, I will go to Mass every day," or "If my child can get off drugs, I will"

Jesus is inviting us to simply trust in God without swearing any extra promise or oaths. The creator who continues to create us each moment is not extracting payment from us and is not looking for our oaths and promises. Wild promises in prayer sometimes center more on us than on God, when all we are being called on to do is to trust. We want to respond to God's goodness to us, but maybe deep down my promises are showing off to God. Is it my own lack of trust that I need to "pay" something for what I ask – when all God asks is to love us and have us love each other?

Teach me, my God, to be humble enough to simply ask for what I need without thinking that you await compensation in return. May I simply ask for your help and guidance in this day, and may my gratitude for your love prompt me to serve and love you, and those you place in my day today. Amen

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