

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Sep 18th 2017**

What attracts me about this passage from Luke is that it refers to the other spirituality. It is not the usual scenario of Jesus calling men and women to leave home and family to follow him. In this passage we find "house" mentioned twice. According to scripture scholars, house or home is mentioned in scripture more often than either temple or church.

In this passage the Centurion is credited by Jesus for his loyalty, concern and care of his slave "who is ill and close to death." The Centurion does not leave his dying servant, not even to go to Jesus to ask healing for his servant. Jesus is amazed at the faith of the Centurion who recognizes that his calling is to family, to his extended household, to his slave. The Centurion speaks to Jesus of his understanding of loyalty and dependability. He is a man responsible for his household.

So often we focus on the call of Jesus to follow him out into the wilderness. The gospels often seem to encourage us to be prepared for the suffering which may follow as a consequence of discipleship. This passage offers hope, peace and joy to those of us who are living out the daily calling of family and household responsibilities. We are not usually called to feats of courage but more customarily to the tedious tasks of family life: birth, sick children, PTA meetings, school activities, unemployment, financial concerns, elderly parents, death, and the endless challenges of daily life. We are called not to wander away without looking back, but rather to be dependable, loyal, and loving to our families and hospitable to those who come to our homes. We are called to recognize and involve ourselves in the sacredness of home and family. I think Luke is reminding us that it is through our families, through our intimate relationships within our families that we encounter Jesus. We are not called to wander in the dessert, spending extended periods in prayer and solitude as did the dessert fathers. Although each of us is called to prayer and solitude and even yearn for it, our sacredness is to be found in the sandbox play of our small children, in the light-hearted banter of our sons, in the "chick chat" with our daughters, in the reminiscing with our parents, and the pillow talk with our spouses. The spirituality of family is not easier nor more difficult, nor is it less sacred than any other form of discipleship.

What a loving creative Spirit is our God who indeed holds each one of us in a unique space of sacredness - no two of us alike! Imagine to love life so fully to appreciate the sacredness in ALL of it. It boggles my mind, captures my heart and frequently trips my feet.

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