

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Apr 4th 2013

“You are witnesses of these things...”

One of the key sub-themes at the end of the gospel of Luke, as well as in his Acts of the Apostles, has to do with Jesus opening the minds and hearts of the disciples to the meaning of his suffering. Jesus taught them by showing how everything in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.

Luke was instructing his Gentile audience (that would be you and me) how important it is to dive into the scriptures to search out not only the meaning of Christ’s suffering and resurrection, but the significance of our own suffering and resurrection.

These are intimately related for all who are baptized into Christ, buried with him so as to rise again with him. That would be you and me.

I don’t know about you, but when I suffer, most of what I think about is either “I don’t deserve this...” or “When will this end?” Most of the time I have too little patient endurance to step back to inquire into the mystery of my own suffering, much less, the suffering of so many others in the world.

So, what did you learn from attending services during Holy Week/Triduum? How are you witnesses to “these things” today in a way that is different from just a bit ago?

It’s too early for me to report, since I’m writing this installment just before that sacred time. So, here’s what I hope for:

I hope to make my indifference to God and others available to divine grace as I submit to having my feet washed on Holy Thursday;

I hope to attend to the mystery of the absence of God in the world and in my life as I regard the empty tabernacle;

I hope to discover joy as I hear the Passion according to John proclaimed on Good Friday;

I hope to have my heart broken open as we pray the many prayers of intercession for the needs of the world at the same service;

I hope to encounter the mystery of my tendency to make others suffer in my place, to persecute the innocent, and maintain the power of judgment over them by venerating the cross;

I hope that the Risen Christ will engage me and all attending the Easter Vigil through the blessing of the night, the vigil of readings, the living Word, the baptism and reception of the elect, and the share in his dying and rising at Communion.

May God meet us in our deepest desire. Happy Easter!

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