

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Apr 27th 2013

“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.”

These final words of today’s gospel simultaneously point to the source of our joy and challenge us as we continue our celebration of the Resurrection of Christ.

Imagine that you are among those gathering to hear the word of the Lord as is described in the reading from Acts. You are one among the crowd who are poor, homeless, ill, jobless, of no status, with no future; among those who are refugees, orphans, prostitutes, criminals, tax collectors, or ordinary citizens struggling to survive and provide for a family; maybe depressed, anxious or feeling hopeless; perhaps there is even one among you who participated in the torture and death of Jesus. And you are there, hearing the amazing, Good News of this man Jesus, and how he was raised from the dead! You are told that he lived and died for YOU, that you may have life to the fullest! And you hear the stories of healing, of wholeness, of hope. And then the people of power try to break it all up, disperse the crowd, shouting at the speakers. But these men don’t back down. They continue to tell their stories of hope and they defend US, even ME!

They insist this message, this Word of Life and Hope, is for all of us who are nobodies! Never before have I experienced such hope and promise, inviting me to think about my life and my world in a whole new way! I wish everyone could hear this – and experience this joy! I even find myself thinking about the people in power - the ones who are so angry and shaking their fists - I pray that if not now, maybe later, they will think about what is being offered, and open their hearts.

That same joy and hope are ours today, but also the challenge. Have I heard these words so often, that they no longer have meaning, no longer surprise and amaze me? Have I been so small in my prayers, and so disappointed in what has not been given that I am cynical and hardened, certain that these words no longer apply to our daily lives in any meaningful way?

I pray today for healing that I may recognize God’s saving power acting in our world today!

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