

Note from Pastor Steve

Jesus spends a lot of his time the week leading up to his death and resurrection speaking about the future. It starts when He enters Jerusalem, crying and speaking about the city future. He tells His disciples the trials and things that are to come. He talks about the coming Spirit that will guide them and change everything for them.

It is a good reminder that God is not looking at just today. He knows our tomorrows. He is leading us through today into a future where we are more connected to him. Jesus told His disciples that He would not leave them as orphans, but would send the Spirit, the counselor, the comforter, to lead and guide His followers.

Today, in the midst of everything that is going on around us. Remember you are not alone. You can rest in Him.

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” - Deuteronomy 31:8

And when I thought of the poor I had met in my life especially in recent years, it was clear that there were poor who were only poor—very sad, often angry, and certainly not blessed.

And then again, I recalled very well there were poor people who were quite otherwise, poor people who wore their poverty beautifully.

Poor people who had the conviction that they were being guided by God, supported by his Presence. Poor people who were able to love, in spite of their sudden vexations—poor people who were patient in trial, rich in hope, strong in adversity.

Poor people who were blessed because they could hear witness, every day, that God was present in their lives, and that he provided for them as he did for the sparrows of the sky, which possess no granaries. Yes this captivated me.

To bear witness, to testify, to myself and to other human beings, that God alone sufficed for me, and that I did not have to be concerned about anything, anything at all—“think of the flowers of the field; they never have to spin or weave; yet not even Solomon in all his regalia was like one of these” (Luke 12:27)

—Francis of Assisi

From Prayer By: Simon Tugwell

Our Lord is sitting by the Temple watching all the people coming and going, putting their offerings into the box. Some of them were making quite a show of it, no doubt, so that everyone would know how much they had put in. But there, among them all, was a little old lady, rather shabbily dressed, who slipped in her twopence half-penny when no one was looking. But the Lord saw her. And he got terribly excited about it. “She’s put in more than all the rest together!” he exclaims.

This little old lady did not realize that she was doing anything spectacular; nothing could have been further from her mind. She did not want to draw attention to herself, because she knew that what she giving was not worth very much, it was not going to repair the Temple roof or get them a new organ or even pay for the Boy’s Scouts Annual Outing. The Temple authorities might well think it was a confounded nuisance having to count all the small change put in by people like her. But she had given all she had, knowing that it was not much, knowing that she was not going to solve anyone’s problems. And surely the Lord recognized in her a kindred spirit. She was doing the same kind of thing that he was doing. He was not solving the world’s problems in any sense that the world could understand, he was not reforming society or abolishing poverty— “the poor you will always have with you” was his comment on that (Matthew 26:11)—he was not doing any of the things some modern Christians think he should have been doing. And many people considered him a nuisance. But he was giving himself, he was giving all he had got, he was giving his very life.

Blessed are the poor! How easily we take that always to mean somebody else. Yet if we want to be with God, we must learn to hear it as “blessed are we who are poor,” we who have not got anything very impressive to give to anybody, whose giving may very well be rather a nuisance, but who still have not given up giving. Who knows? Our giving of ourselves in all our poverty may one day bring some joy to somebody else who is poor, who is not calculating, not trying to repair a church roof. God invites us into this conspiracy of the poor, making himself its head, giving himself in poverty and weakness, knowing that if we will only receive that humble gift of his, it will transform everything. If we are prepared to be poor enough to learn and to appreciate the manner of God giving, we shall find in that poverty the seed of all perfection.

Father, I am beginning to know how much I miss when I fail to talk to thee in prayer, and through prayer to receive into my life the strength and the guidance which only thou canst give. Forgive me for the pride and the presumption that make me continue to struggle to manage my own affairs to the exhaustion of my body, the weariness of my mind, the trial of my faith.

In a moment like this I know that thou couldst have worked thy good in me with so little strain, with so little effort. And then to thee would have been given the praise and the glory. When I neglect to pray, mine is the loss. Forgive me Lord. Amen