

Sisters and Brothers, may we be filled with the Joy of Salvation!

02/14/2021

Covenant Life

- With the combination of vaccine availability and reduced levels of infections the coordinators are now discussing a date to restart in-person Community Gatherings. Please pray that plans will come together and we will soon announce a specific date for our next MSM prayer meeting.
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222

Reflection - I have always been curious about Jesus' direction to the cured leper "*See that you tell no one anything*" (Mk 1:44). I would have expected Jesus to have wanted the leper to proclaim it from the rooftops and to witness to as many people as possible. Pondering this for a few minutes another perspective emerges. Jesus was not only fully divine, but He was also fully human. He had seen what happens following a miracle and the immediate impact to His life. The fully human Jesus probably preferred to remain in the city connected to those who accompanied Him. If word of the miracle got out, He would have to find a deserted place to rest and pray and this probably was not His preference.

But, as we have seen from gospel story after story, Jesus did not choose to act upon His own preferences but rather upon what He discerned was the will of His Father.

As the story unfolds, we see that the cured leper ignored Jesus' direction and proceeded to 'publicize the whole matter'...which, if we place ourselves in his shoes and imagine living life in that day and age with such a terrible disease...we can understand his exuberant joy and the challenge it would be to keep silent.

What is instructive here is that Jesus did what needed to be done rather than what was convenient. Jesus was willing to unite the leper to his family, his community even if it cost Him His ability to remain in town with His disciples, with His community. Jesus so identified with the suffering of the person before Him that He looked beyond the impact, inconvenience, suffering that He might face

and took this on to set the other free. This miracle is then a small foretelling of the great sacrifice of what He did for you and I on the cross in redeeming us from our sin.

To be clear, I am not advocating that we neglect obvious safety protocols to reach out today and touch the lepers of our day but there are ways that we can put this teaching into practice in our lives today and safely reach out and touch those who are hurting, lonely, and would benefit from our loving (safe) outreach.

If we are tempted to focus inward on our own troubles and challenges then the responsorial psalm today (32) reassures us *"I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation."* So, it is up to us, will we follow Jesus' example? With our own conviction of salvation, will we follow Jesus' conviction in looking past our own inconvenience or potential for suffering and identify with those in our lives who need to be set free?

We can turn this into a two-part question to ponder. How can I respond today (with the obvious limitations of a pandemic) and, how will I respond after being set free from this pandemic cloister?

The coordinators have started praying and discerning how we as a Community and how we as leaders will respond. This is best built on the foundation of every member going the same journey of praying through and starting to act. Lord, how are you calling me to respond to the challenges of 2021? Who do you want me to identify with (despite the potential inconvenience or suffering) such that I am willing to do whatever needs to be done to show Christ-like love?

Paul, in the second reading (1 Cor 10:31—11:1), sets a high bar as his response. He makes a bold statement after issuing his instruction. This passage is worthy of further reflection. We must bring it in with honesty to see how the Holy Spirit might be speaking to us individually. May we too reach a point where we can make the same bold statement as Paul.

Let us pray *"Jesus, I am sorry for the times I have focused on my own wants and needs and overlooked the opportunity to identify and serve others. I truly want*

to follow Your example and not count the cost of unconditionally loving those You have put in my life. Give me the grace and courage to reach out as You did. My desire is that everything I do and say builds Your Kingdom, pleases others, avoids offense, benefits the many, so that those around me are saved. Jesus, I Love You! Amen."

God bless,
David