

Sisters and Brothers, Come O Lord!

12/27/2020

### Covenant Life

- I am sincerely grateful for the financial support during this challenging year. Donations must be in our procession before the end of the day Thursday 12/31 to be counted as a 2020 donation, else they will be counted as a 2021 donation. You can donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222 or contact me directly.
- The audio from our December Community Gathering can be heard [here](#). When preparation is complete the summary and the transcript will be loaded [here](#).
- We have completed our 2021 Promise Drive but the link is [here](#) because we want to hear from everyone recommitting to our covenant.

**Reflection** - When Laurie and I returned from Houston in 2003 we noticed that some people had stopped regular attendance at the Community Gathering. I recall asking why and hearing two specific answers: some stopped coming because of what they felt after poor decisions by their children and others because of unreconciled hurt within Community.

I recall being a bit perplexed by the answer. Growing up in Community I heard and saw the authentic witness of unconditional love. Sure, we hurt one another but that was the blessing of Community. We made a covenant with one another to unconditionally work through such things and never let our pain, suffering, hurt, fear, anxiety, embarrassment, or opinions regarding how things should be done...get in the way of our unconditional covenant love of God and our sisters and brothers.

As I meditated on the two situations described I found myself in the place of the parent who felt like a parental failure when, despite my best efforts, my children made choices that were not on the road to sainthood. I found myself in the place of someone looking down on another family that was struggling and jealously looking up at a family that seemed to be doing everything perfect. I also recalled numerous times where I caused serious hurt in a Community sister or brother because of something I did or said.

What the Holy Spirit brought to my mind, then and now, is an analogy He gave me when I was giving a talk as a youth. It was a picture of my rock tumbler polishing rocks. I put in various random rocks and moist grit and plugged it in. After days the rough edges were gone, and the rocks were polished brightly. When I told the story, I explained that we were the rocks, Community was the tumbler, and the Holy Spirit was the electricity.

Looking back on those times I can see that God had a plan. I cannot erase the hurt I caused, but I can be reconciled with those that I hurt. If I am holding onto a hurt, I can be released. With hindsight, I can see how many rough edges were broken and worn off making me who I am today. I can also release my children to God. I know I did the best I could, given the circumstances, and that all I can do now is to keep loving them, praying for them, fasting for them, and living the life God has called me to as a witness. The rest is in His hands.

If our brokenness is holding us back, we need to stand on the knowledge that not only does our brokenness not hold us back...it is a condition of surrender. Life is a journey of surrender. God made us that way and too often we look for approval from the world when in fact, the world is a distraction from the total giving of ourselves that God seeks. If we are broken, let us rejoice in it.

Today is the feast of the Holy Family. Today is a perfect day to take any burdens, pains, any lack of reconciliation... to our Heavenly Father and once and for all surrender them to Him. Let Him pour the precious blood of Jesus over us and totally heal us. We can also do the same for our Community sisters and brothers and restore any Community family relationships that are strained or broken. God cannot fully use us unless we are fully alive, free, and surrendered.

I want to offer two suggestions for moving forward. First, I suggest a meditative reflection on Colossians 3: 12-17 which is titled *The Practice of Virtues* in my bible. In Community we have taught and lived these virtues our whole lives. During these challenging times we need each other more than ever. The words "bearing with one another and forgiving one another" and "teach and admonish one another" spoke the loudest to me but the Holy Spirit will bring other points to you

as you pray and meditate on them. One of the many blessings of Community is calling one another on, holding one another accountable. Let us really be there for one another and find creative ways to connect and love one another until we can physically come together again.

The other resource I offer is a spiritual medication that Sharon Harmon is providing us for prayerful reflection. I have attached (click [here](#)) to this email and encourage you to use it this week. Yes, we have all received Jesus in many ways and many times over the years, but every time we pause and pray and ask, He will come into our empty stables and refresh and renew us with His unconditional love.

Let us pray together the prayer from the meditation: *"Lord Jesus, Come! May the empty stable of my life welcome you and receive your light and love in the midst of darkness. How you transformed the Bethlehem stable to hold the salvation of the world! And how my unworthy heart hopes for the same transformation! So, I say YES and offer my heart for your throne, bearing witness that through your birth, you answer the cry of every human heart. You are the fullness of Love for which our souls were created, and we are at home in your Presence. Amen."*

God bless,

David