



Bringing Home the Word

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time | October 28, 2018

God Restores Us to Wholeness

By Mary Katharine Deeley

When my mother was alive and Thanksgiving rolled around, my siblings and I would pack up our respective families and travel home for the traditional holiday dinner. There was something so right and satisfying about seeing one another, sharing what had happened since we saw each other last and eating the good food that was part of the feast. Of course as we got older, we helped out with the cooking, serving, and cleaning up, and with entertaining

the frequent guests who showed up. On that day we were all family.

The year my mother died, my brother, sisters, and I weren't sure what to do. Her house had been sold, and we were scattered to different parts of the country. Thanksgiving was a very different feast that year, as it often is when matriarchs and patriarchs pass. We talked about what we missed and wanted, and now we celebrate Thanksgiving at my house with all who can make it. The tradition has become ours, and we look forward to it every year.

Imagine being unable to celebrate any of your traditions for forty years. That's what the Jews faced during their long exile. They were unable to gather as a family and worship God in their own way. Jeremiah's vision of their joyful return holds out the hope that God will once again gather them up and bring them home. There, God will restore them to wholeness just as Jesus restored Bartimaeus, who courageously called out to him and asked for what he most desired. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus' life, especially during the three years of his public ministry, was a continual encounter with people. Among them, the sick had a special place. How many pages of the Gospel tell of these encounters! The paralytic, the blind man, the leper, ...We cannot fail to visit and assist those who are sick.

—General audience, November 9, 2016



Sunday Readings

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Proclaim your praise and say: The LORD has saved his people, the remnant of Israel.

Hebrews 5:1-6

...It was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: "You are my son."

Mark 10:46-52

[Bartimaeus] threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus.... "Master, I want to see."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Like Bartimaeus, is there a need you want Jesus to fill? What is it?
- Might you be the answer to how Jesus wants to fill someone's need? Don't be one of the crowd holding him back.



Hungering for Justice

By Donald Senior, CP

[Jesus said,] "Blessed are they who hunger...for righteousness, for they will be satisfied" (Matthew 5:6).

Jesus' beatitudes hit their marks like well-thrown darts. In Luke's version, the focus is on raw physical hunger: "Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied" (6:21). Matthew's formulation doesn't soften the blunt force of Jesus' words but rather profoundly extends their meaning. Jesus' blessing now reaches all those who long for God's righteousness, whether they're physically hungry themselves or heart-stricken on behalf of those who are.

A key word here is *righteousness*, derived from the Greek word *dikaiosune*, which translates as "righteousness" or "justice." In English these terms have several connotations. To be righteous, for example, can be negative, referring to those who are too sure of their virtue and quick to let others know about it. Justice can be thought of as a legal term, as when we say someone is "brought to justice"—punished for unlawful deeds.

But the Bible's "justice" and "righteousness" have very different connotations. God is the best exemplar of what biblical justice means because God is trustworthy and faithful. God always does what's right. Therefore, the biblical peoples would pray that God would be just and righteous toward Israel, meaning that God would compassionately stand by his people. In turn, justice or righteousness in

the human realm should mirror God's justice, being faithful to one's obligations and doing what's right.

So the people Jesus blesses in this beatitude are those hungering for God to establish true righteousness or justice. In such a world there will be no child who goes a day without bread and no families will spend the winter in a tent. In a just or righteous world, those of us with resources will feel a sense of obligation toward the needy.

Gospel Echoes

As in every one of the beatitudes, Jesus' words echo throughout the Gospel. He warns his disciples that in order for them to enter the kingdom of heaven, their righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). Above everything else, they are to "seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). In the end, God will judge us on the basis of our commitment to justice.

Jesus' vision of a just world expresses a fundamental longing of the whole Bible. The searing prayer of Psalm 107:5-9 may have stirred in Jesus' heart as he preached this beatitude to his disciples: "They were hungry and thirsty; their life was ebbing away. In their distress they cried to the LORD, who rescued them in their peril...Let them thank the LORD

for his kindness, such wondrous deeds for the children of Adam. For he satisfied the thirsty, filled the hungry with good things."

Where Justice Rules

Jesus wasn't an impractical dreamer looking in vain for an ideal world, but a tireless worker for justice. He would give his life healing the sick, feeding the multitudes, and confronting those whose sense of justice had withered. Jesus believed deeply that God's will for humanity is a place where justice rules. "Your kingdom come" was the heartbeat of Jesus' ministry and the voice of his great prayer. Every great saint steeped in the teaching of Jesus and animated by his Spirit has lived out this same vision of human life.

Those who hunger and thirst for justice "will be satisfied." Jesus' beatitude doesn't say how and when such satisfaction will come—only that it will. Any Christian who struggles to be just and treat others in the right manner follows in the footsteps of Jesus himself. +



Lord, I am grateful you came to heal the brokenhearted. Help me to trust in you when I am in trouble.

From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

October 29-
November 3

Monday, Weekday:
Eph 4:32—5:8 / Lk 13:10-17

Tuesday, Weekday:
Eph 5:21-33 or 5:2a, 25-32 / Lk 13:18-21

Wednesday, Weekday:
Eph 6:1-9 / Lk 13:22-30

Thursday, Solemnity of All Saints:
Rv 7:2-4, 9-14 / 1 Jn 3:1-3 / Mt 5:1-12a

Friday, Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls): Wis 3:1-9 / Rom 5:5-11 or Rom 6:3-9 / Jn 6:37-40

Saturday, Weekday: Phil 1:18b-26 / Lk 14:1, 7-11