

October 14, 2018

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

*I prayed and prudence was given me; I pleaded  
and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me*

The story of the rich young man carries a message that is not easy to miss. He went away from Jesus' invitation to follow him sad. He had many possessions, the Gospel of Mark says. We realize of course that the spiritual message this story carries is that the possessions we carry in our souls which keep us sad are those which burden us, isolate us and deplete our energies for God.

John of Cross from the 16th century offers a good commentary on what would help us reclaim our energies and not go away sad. To paraphrase him: Consider a drop of water as an example of God's indwelling presence in us. Waterdrops in the atmosphere are created when water vapor condenses on tiny particles of dust. At the center of every waterdrop is a particle.

Similarly, every soul is wrapped around a particle of God. God is found at our innermost center. It's not just that God dwells inside us, it is God who is at the center of our being, an integral and enduring part of who we are. God is not added to us, we are added to God. Everyone we meet is a God-particle wrapped in a soul.

So how do we encounter this God who is the center of our being? By peeling away the clutter of self - our certitudes, our mindless distractions, our fears and self protections to find ourselves floating in God, encompassed by love, from which God's self spills out into our lives and into the lives of those we touch. When Jesus was asked where do you live, he said. "*Come and See.*" We want to see where he lives. The good news is that there are many routes we can take to see.

One way is the practice of personal, interior silence, whether it be silent praying or simply sitting in silence. This is a very fruitful way to see where Jesus lives. Another way to find where Jesus lives is to come together with others and search for God in our lives together with them. There are many ways to do this. One of them St. Mary is planning to offer beginning next month. It is a spiritual practice we are calling: "*Come and See: A time to learn - A time to pray - A time to care.*"

For some time, I have felt drawn to provide something like this to help people become more aware of what is going on in the world behind their eyes as well as what is happening in front of them.

Each first Saturday during the school year will host a gathering to explore a particular spiritual dimension in our lives, to be followed by personal reflection and then group sharing. Our first gathering will be on Saturday, November 3rd, from 10-12.

Some of the gifts we can experience from participating in this spiritual quest can be:

- a lessening of the spirit of indifference towards others
- a growing sense of intimate spiritual connection with others
- a feeling of liberation in acknowledging our frailties and imperfections
- feeling a movement from fear and doubt to a union of hearts
- realizing we can make decisions together.

What might some of the spiritual dimensions in our lives be that we could well look at?

- How I feel God is acting in my life
- How it sometimes seems like God is not acting in my life
- What helps me face my fears
- How I can help carry the pain of those abused by the Church
- Does my faith help me face loss
- What is still paralyzing me in my life . . . and more

There is a short description of this program in today's bulletin. Again, the first gathering will be on Saturday, November 3rd, from 10-12 in the parish hall. Participation is not dependent upon being able to all these gatherings. There will be no lunch offered, but folks are invited to bring their own snacks. From my experience, I have seen people come together to share what is going on in their lives and come away with something more than what they had hoped. All are welcome to come. So, COME AND SEE!

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