



Daily Meditations

April 27-May 2, 2020

The Biblical readings are taken from the Daily Office in the Book of Common Prayer for Year 2 and written by the St. Stephen's Meditation Writing Team: Dave Boyd, Becky Denton, Pat Gillory, Traci Maxwell, Jay Nickel, Bob Reed, T.Cay Rowe, and Carroll Wilson.

Click on the scripture reading for each day to go directly to link.

COLLECT, EASTER 3

O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Faith in the Midst of Suffering

Monday, April 27, 2020

[I Peter 5:1-14](#)

"And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you." - 1 Peter 5:10

How contemporary are these words of hope and faith written 2,000 years ago! As I write this meditation, the world is suffering through the incredibly deadly and destructive COVID-19 pandemic in which tens of thousands have died and many more have suffered incredible pain and hardship. It has been predicted that this week will see the peak of death and destruction in the United States due to the virus, but even if that turns out to be true, the economic hardship will be with us for years to come. How to maintain faith in the face of such suffering? The only way we can: one day at a time, one prayer at a time, one opportunity at a time to help those in need.

Surreal

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

[Colossians 1:1-14](#)

"...may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father..." - Colossians 1:11b

We're now coming to the end of the fourth week in self-quarantine. The only word that seems appropriate to describe this is "surreal." The news each day is filled with scenes of death and suffering as this dreaded virus wreaks a path of misery around the world, and yet when I look out my window I see the sublime beauty of a Hill Country spring day, with wildflowers bursting into bloom and clear blue skies above. The contrast is crazy-making. I pray for the sick, the dying, and the grieving, and for the safety of the brave health-care workers on the front lines of this battle against this cruel virus. I also pray with the author of Colossians for the grace to endure all of this "with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father."

Universal Christ

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

Colossians 1:15-23

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created...He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together." - Colossians 1:15-17

One of the great joys of my life has been our Sunday and Tuesday morning adult classes, in particular our study of Richard Rohr's *The Universal Christ*. I started this class as a way for others to read along with me and explore the depth of meaning in this profound book. Consider the quotation from Colossians above. What does it mean to say that Jesus is both a man who lived and was brutally murdered in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago *and* is also a universal presence in the world that has existed from the beginning and will continue healing the world forever? And more importantly, what does that have to do with my life? How can I live more fully and more lovingly through a deeper understanding of who this "Universal Christ" is? I have learned that I can't really know what I am thinking unless I can express it in language, both in writing and in dialogue with others. That is the great value to me of sacred studies: They provide us a way to broaden and deepen our faith in dialogue with other seekers whom I have come to love and respect. I have been so blessed by their participation with me. I miss being with you each week.

Absent but Present

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Colossians 1:24-2:7

"For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and firmness of your faith in Christ." - Colossians 2:5

All of us are having to deal with being "absent in body" from each other in all kinds of creative ways. Zoom, FaceTime, and conference calls are all proving to be a Godsend as ways for us to stay connected. For me, the St. Stephen's worship services on Facebook and YouTube have been so special. Even though we can't be there to sing with the choir, we can at least see our beloved chapel and hear Anne's beautiful voice singing the anthems. Fr. Phil's calm, meditative sermons help me stay grounded, and Darelle's Godly Play presentations are just delightful. Thanks so much to all of them and to Robert and Jeannetta and all the others who are keeping our church family so connected and with us in spirit during this very necessary time of social distancing.

Transformation

Friday, May 1, 2020

Colossians 2:8-23

"...when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross." - Colossians 2:13b-14

We hear echoes of this verse from Colossians every Sunday, when Fr. Phil reminds us that "God is infinitely more concerned with our future than with our past." How hard it is for us to accept this! As Fr. Richard Rohr describes it, God is not in the punishment business...He is interested in transformation. Or as my dear friend the Lutheran pastor puts it, "Stop worrying about salvation. You've already been saved. Now go live like it!"

Compassion

Saturday, May 2, 2020

Colossians 3:1-17

"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another..." - Colossians 3:12-13a

If there is anything to be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope it is that we are all in this together. The virus has been no respecter of boundaries, nationalities, language, income, or privilege. The courage and self-sacrifice of so many has been inspiring. May we all continue to reach out remotely to one another in compassion and love...that is the only way we will get through this crisis and begin to rebuild our nation and our world.

Connect with us

