

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Feb 12th 2015

In today's first reading, Eve is created and Adam gives names to the animals. In the Psalm, God promises generations to come to those who fear the Lord. In the Gospel, Jesus tries to step back from the crowds. He encounters a Greek woman and he frees her daughter from demons. These readings seem disparate, and perhaps they are. Still, what speaks to me is a common theme of rewriting the script.

In the first reading, we have a second story of creation. In Chapter 1 of Genesis, the animals were created earlier and God's creation culminates in human beings. In our reading from the second chapter of Genesis, man is there at the start and his world is not complete. God first forms the beasts of the earth from the earth itself. God then forms a human partner, not from the earth but from man himself.

In today's Gospel, there is again a change in the story line. In the previous portion of the seventh chapter of Mark's Gospel, Jesus has been dealing with His own tradition. In our Gospel, Jesus withdraws from these people and assists someone outside of the Jewish institutions.

Even the Psalm and the Gospel Acclamation are messages of transition from a previous period of hardship.

Both creation stories give man a special dignity. They just differ in how it is imbued. In the seventh chapter of Mark's Gospel, Jesus does not change His message, but again there is a new direction in where and how it is applied.

My reflection today takes me to a focus on the big idea. Daily events are transitory. The exact words we choose and the way we choose to express the message are subject to change. I think of my own lectures for my Physics classes. I realize that each time I do a lecture, I modify what has been used before to better connect with the current group of students that I will be addressing. I have learned over time the typical student needs to have the same concept presented to them 5 times before they really begin to integrate the idea. I find that getting the message across is best served by delivering it repeatedly in different styles and different contexts.

My prayer today is to avoid obsessing on the details of how the Lord chooses to communicate, and instead to listen for the message.

Heavenly Father,

I ask for openness to your message in the many forms it presents itself.

Help me to receive Your love and Your grace though the varied accounts of Scripture, through the diverse ways that You touch me in this world and through the sometimes seemingly dissimilar ways that Jesus, the prophets and the saints have provided a model for bringing me closer to you.

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