

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Sep 6th 2016

Have you noticed that there is a phrase used by people when they may have made an error, or just a wee bit of a misunderstanding? It is said in a manner as an apologetic response of self-acknowledgement of fault. Maybe even a humble way to say “I screwed up”! “My bad!” Really! That’s not so bad! I learned on-line that Shakespeare use it in Sonnet 112, and most popular use began in the 90’s. It is still found in expressions of contemporary music and art.

Reflecting on the first reading today from Corinthians seems to be talking about “really bad” where “my bad” just doesn’t cut it! Perhaps, “my really bad” might find a way to lead toward a conversion of heart and behavior. It seems that this scenario is not far from what we are experiencing in our world, at this time, on the news, and in every other form of social commentary on the state of current affairs. We are human persons, human organizations, human institutions, human societies with all our faults and bad behaviors. “Our bad”! However, there seems to be more going on here....

This reading appears to call out asking where is there “holy” or Christ-like leadership to help bring about a just and whole society. ”Do you not know the holy ones will judge the world?” Where is the “my good” that will help heal, judge justly, lead compassionately, wisely and with “courageous hope?” A book published in 2011 by author, Leonard Doohan, caught my attention with his title: Courageous Hope, the Call of Leadership. Doohan writes:

“The splendid task of leadership is a vocation to hope. A person without hope is no longer a leader. A great leader is an agent of hope...has a hope-filled vision of humanity. It requires faith, positive thinking, sharing with good people, reflection and contemplation...it implies healing and liberation, bringing out the best in everyone, and moving forward in spite of setbacks.”

In our Gospel today we see Jesus, a leader of hope. He is choosing the leadership that will carry on his vision of the Reign of God. Jesus chooses individuals who are not perfect. Yet, He sees their potential, challenges them to heal, and for each, to experience a personal transformation. Their “good” is to be leaders of hope in a struggling world. I believe, this too, is “our good.” It is our “holy.”

We too were chosen through our baptism, and by living a sacramental life in our world, we are people of hope. Every person has been given gifts to contribute to building up the Reign of God here and now. Our challenge is to be those Christ-like and courageous leaders of hope where one day our universal consciousness of “my bad” might be transformed to “my good.”

“Everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all.” We have a choice how to use our power: To be leaders of hope, healing, compassion and transformation, or death. “I chose you from the world, that you may go and bear fruit that will last, says the Lord.” May the fruit we bear, “my good,” be for the common good, all good, and for the greater Good and glory of God.

Questions for reflection: How have I been a witness to hope, a healing agent in our world? What gifts do I bring? What in my own life needs healing and transformation?

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