

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Jan 4th 2017

In the first nineteen verses of the first chapter of John's Gospel, from which our reading of the Good News is taken, we read about a "Light." These verses are known as the Prologue, a kind of an overture. Themes of light, seeing, day and times-of-day are sprinkled throughout the entire Gospel of John. John is not subtle at all. Good things happen in the light and bad during the dark and John does not give up on this symbol of just who Jesus is and desires to be known.

Our Gospel Reading for this day has references to "day" and of course, "Come and see."

In those first nineteen verses a direct disclosure is made also that John the Baptist is not the "Light," but a "witness" to that "Light." There had been some followers of John who had been believing that John was the Messiah, or "Light." We hear John pointing out in a dramatic statement that the Lamb of God was passing by him, John, and his own followers are now to follow the Lamb and see the "Light" and by that "Light" come to believe.

The disciples of John went, saw, and stayed that "day." This "seeing" results in others throughout the Gospel making great statements of faith that Jesus is the Christ. These belief admissions are the real and ultimate theme of John's Gospel and the "Pitching His tent among us." The Man Born Blind receives his sight from Jesus, the Woman at the Well receives her life back in a different light, as does Lazarus who comes out of the darkness of his tomb. Thomas sees and believes after being shown the Person and wounds of Jesus. Peter goes fishing and, of course, catches nothing all "night." Jesus appears at dawn, and guess what, he catches a boat-load and catches sight of Jesus on the day-broken shore.

The call of Jesus to Peter follows the breakfast when Jesus asks Peter, "Have you seen enough now to come and follow Me?" John's whole Gospel is about seeing enough of the "Light" so as to walk into, not darkness at all, but into more of seeing life, because of the "Light," who is the Christ, The Sent, the "Word," the Visible who is from and of the Invisible.

We are at the beginning of a new year this week. Jesus continues to live in the Tent He pitched among us. He has come to be seen within the darkness of our doubts and of our fears of just what might be around the next corner of our days.

Larry Gillick, S.J.-Creighton University's The Deglman Center for Ignation Spirituality