

Thoughts of Hope, by Fr. Dennis Wait

March, 2012

We are now about half way on our Lenten journey with Jesus and each other to Easter's glory. I pray it is a time of forgiveness and healing for us all. I just returned from a parish mission at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Mulvane, KS, just Southeast of Wichita. The theme was: "Forgive Me, Heal Me, Fill Me". We had a wonderful turnout of the people and many were touched by the Spirit of the living God. I was so touched by the people in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and when we prayed over them for healing, along with their friends and parishioners who also came forth to pray with them, not to mention Fr. Michael Maybrier, the pastor, praying as well for each one who came up for Jesus' touch upon them.

A woman of the parish, named Rosie, told me she was growing a peach apricot tree, a hybrid, called a "peach cot". Its blossoms are just beautiful and large. It reminded me of Psalm 1: 3 "They are like a tree (those whose joy is the word of the Lord) planted near streams of water that yields its fruit in season; its leaves never wither; whatever they do prospers." Rosie could easily be a cursillista at heart; she is a prayer warrior and a nurse for 41 years!

I would encourage you to do the same, and if there is something that is still an obstacle to your full joy and peace of heart and mind, and then give it to God. We are so blest to have the Eucharist daily, our adoration chapels, and our shared and private devotions to Mary, St. Joseph and the Saints, our chaplets of Divine Mercy, and our desire to go to our inner room, close the door and pray to your Father and your Father who sees in secret will reward you (Matthew 6:6). I hope to make my desert day right after I finish this article. It is a time that I spend alone with God and try to see what He wants me to notice in my journey to the Kingdom. Remember the Father's words: "This is my beloved Son, listen to Him." (Mark 9: 7)

I found a saying called: "The Devil Left His Bags." You might want to look this up on the internet. There are eight powerful examples to this reflection and here is one of them:

"You decided to let go of the past hurts from growing up in an unstable family environment, yet you believe you are unworthy of love from others and you refuse to get attached to anyone (you let the devil leave his bags)."

The refrain at the end to all eight examples is: "When you put the devil out, PLEASE MAKE SURE HE TAKES HIS BAGS!" The church said: AMEN!

Once we are reconciled, healed and ready to be fed at the "table of the Lord," then just let the Blessed Trinity fill you to overflowing (John 10: 10)

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, former general of the Jesuits, now in Heaven says it this way when he prays: "Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way...what we are in love with will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the

morning...how you spend your weekends, what you read...what breaks your heart and what amazes you...fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.”

Remember the two blind men sitting by the roadside and Jesus asked them: “What do you want me to do for you?” (Matthew 20: 29-34) This is the same question Jesus asks of you and me.

From the Holy Spirit prayer: “Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of us your faithful.” And in another prayer to the Holy Spirit: “Come, Holy Spirit, Replace the tension within me with your holy relaxation...Replace the coldness within me with your loving warmth...Dull the edge of my pride and Sharpen the edge of my humility...Light the fires of my love.” “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” (Mt. 5: 8)

“Father I beg you to heal my negative emotions and any wounds in my heart and spirit...I break all negative genetic material in the name of the God the Father Almighty, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and in the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Protection and Healing Prayer, parts of it)

A few words from the prayer of Edward Carpenter: “Hold (the waters of your mind) them still, so still; and let them become clear, so clear, so mirror like...and Love Himself shall come and bend over, and catch His own likeness in you.”

Remember we become what we gaze upon. St. Clare of Assisi prayed: “Gaze upon Him, Consider Him, Contemplate Him, as you desire to imitate Him.” Sr. Mary Evelyn Jegen, SND, calls this “Benevolent Gazing”. She says: “its aim is to bring all under the saving glance of love...even in the face of suffering, of evil, and of seemingly intractable problems.” Yes, it isn’t saying that the evil experience is good, but to see the Holy Spirit in the midst of the hurtful, suffering situation. (The Three Glances of Christ)

So men and women of God, our children, have a most blessed Easter Season with Jesus and the whole family of humankind! Do spend time with those who cheer you, write down a psalm of your own, listen to music or to the sound of your own singing voice, have gratitude especially for the things I don’t like, those hard things, write down that burden and then cast it away, dab a drop of lavender on your wrist, reminding you that you have released that burden, let the Scripture read you and pray, pray, pray with those in season and out of season, with the just and the unjust, with whomever God directs you to.

I end with the “Senility Prayer”:

God grant me the senility to forget

The people I never liked anyway,

The good fortune to run into the ones I do,

And the eyesight to tell the difference.

Love and prayers,

Fr. Dennis Wait, tu hermano