

Friday, March 27th, 2020
Friday in the Fourth Week of Lent

Collect for the Day

O God, you have given us the Good News of your abounding love in your Son Jesus Christ: So fill our hearts with thankfulness that we may rejoice to proclaim the good tidings we have received; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Readings for the Day

Wisdom 2:1, 12-24

For they reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves,
‘Short and sorrowful is our life,
and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end,
and no one has been known to return from Hades.

¹² ‘Let us lie in wait for the righteous man,
because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions;
he reproaches us for sins against the law,
and accuses us of sins against our training.

¹³ He professes to have knowledge of God,
and calls himself a child* of the Lord.

¹⁴ He became to us a reproof of our thoughts;

¹⁵ the very sight of him is a burden to us,
because his manner of life is unlike that of others,
and his ways are strange.

¹⁶ We are considered by him as something base,
and he avoids our ways as unclean;
he calls the last end of the righteous happy,
and boasts that God is his father.

¹⁷ Let us see if his words are true,
and let us test what will happen at the end of his life;

¹⁸ for if the righteous man is God’s child, he will help him,
and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.

¹⁹ Let us test him with insult and torture,
so that we may find out how gentle he is,
and make trial of his forbearance.

²⁰ Let us condemn him to a shameful death,
for, according to what he says, he will be protected.’

²¹ Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray,
for their wickedness blinded them,

²² and they did not know the secret purposes of God,

nor hoped for the wages of holiness,
nor discerned the prize for blameless souls;
²³ for God created us for incorruption,
and made us in the image of his own eternity,
²⁴ but through the devil's envy death entered the world,
and those who belong to his company experience it.

Psalm 34:15-22

- 15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, *
and his ears are open to their cry.
- 16 The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, *
to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.
- 17 The righteous cry, and the Lord hears them *
and delivers them from all their troubles.
- 18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted *
and will save those whose spirits are crushed.
- 19 Many are the troubles of the righteous, *
but the Lord will deliver him out of them all.
- 20 He will keep safe all his bones; *
not one of them shall be broken.
- 21 Evil shall slay the wicked, *
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.
- 22 The Lord ransoms the life of his servants, *
and none will be punished who trust in him.

John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him. ²Now the Jewish festival of Booths* was near. ¹⁰ But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were* in secret.

²⁵ Now some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, 'Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill?' ²⁶ And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah? * ²⁷ Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.' ²⁸ Then Jesus cried out as he was

teaching in the temple, ‘You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him. ²⁹I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.’ ³⁰Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come.

Reflection

“You know me, and you know where I am from”

We share a deep human need for other people to know and understand us, to not just know our names, but to really get who we are, to know our stories. To know not just the person we are right now, but how we got to be that person. That’s one of the particular joys of a long friendship, that your friend can recall who you were growing up, and help you remember where you came from, and the ways you changed between then and now. But people who have known us a long time can also be challenging to deal with if they can’t make sense of the ways we change over the years. It’s difficult to talk to someone who used to know you well, and explain that you’ve changed since they knew you, that just because they know where you’re from doesn’t mean they really know you.

One of the persistent challenges Jesus faced in his ministry was just this: people thought that they understood everything about him, even when they did not. You can hear this in today’s reading, where some of the people of Jerusalem become convinced that Jesus cannot be the Messiah, because they know where he is from. It sounds a lot like the question the people of Jesus’s hometown ask in Matthew 13:55 “Is not this the carpenter’s son?” So many of the people Jesus encounters think that because they know something about him and where he’s from, they don’t need to learn anything else.

But Jesus’s reply to the crowd reminds them and us that we don’t yet know everything we need to know about Jesus. We’re not done learning about him and his story. Yes, we know him and where he comes from, but Jesus’s ministry is all about pointing beyond himself, to the Father who sent him. Jesus is always offering us an invitation to know him more deeply, to learn who he is and the story he is telling in new ways. Even as we live in this season of greater uncertainty, and of more time spent at home, my prayer is that we can find in that time the chance to go deeper with God. That we can learn something new about who Jesus is, and about how our own stories are part of the greater story God is telling, through Jesus, and through each of us.

~The Rev. Martin Geiger