

“The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground...”

As I researched, read, sought to understand what it is that the Holy Spirit would have me say, I came upon this poem by Ann Weems:

Which is the holy ground, when is the ground holy
a place to take off my sandals, to walk barefoot on holy ground
We miss so much, limiting ourselves
if we do not see the holy in our midst
everyday grace, ordinary, real right before our eyes
All the ground is holy
Feel the rich earth, the hard ground, the rock
beneath our bare feet. Walk, run, play, kneel
on the holy ground
all around us

Sure, there are spaces, places so inspirational and awe striking, so breathtaking, that our only response is silence, tears, sheer unspeakable reverence. But, what if we treated ALL ground as holy, as sacred space? Realized God, Love, the Divine as the ground of our being? Are we aware that it is not we who create the Kingdom, but that we are invited, blessed, ordained, called, in our response to the covenant through Baptismal vows, to plant seeds of encouragement and to be sowers, scatterers of seeds of goodwill, peace, mercy, compassion, justice, reconciliation, restoration, as we minister to both humankind and the rest of creation, in need around us? As children of God, siblings in the human family, caretakers of all that exists on, in, and around us on this fragile earth, our Island Home, you and I are the someone mentioned in Mark's Gospel today. What a gift to come from Eden, the last of the wonders to be given life and breath, yet entrusted with the precious responsibility of sharing the Good News, protecting, tending, caring for and helping to sustain the treasures of the planet.

We hear in the next verse from Mark, that the seed would sprout and grow but he/she does not know how. Might this be another way of saying it is with wonder that one approaches the works of the Creator? While there is some explanation for much of what is evident around us, what a marvelous thing that mystery remains to surprise, delight, challenge, and beckon us to discover, connect, to trust...God's presence and work is most often seen in small and surprising places and ways.

Might we think about what our world, our more immediate surroundings might look like, if you and I trust as Samuel did? How many of you remember choosing sides, picking teams, hoping, wishing, praying to be selected for whatever committee, activity, game, part in the play, you name it...from kindergarten and for ever more? Were you the “captain”, the “chooser”, the lead in selecting who got a part, where someone fit in? Maybe you were the one always on the side lines, chosen last, overlooked...or perhaps have experience on both sides of the “field”?

I ask that we consider how much that has changed through the years? Are the judgements we may have made in our youth and in our inexperienced way of life still present to a degree in our daily dealings, in our perceptions, in our mindsets, in our lifestyles?

In today's reading from Samuel, we heard that seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel as he prepared to select and anoint a king of God's choosing. None of the seven, despite appearing to be ideal candidates, was the person God had in mind. But, there was one more son-the youngest, not invited to join the others; out in the back forty, playing the harp, writing poetry, and tending sheep. When David is presented, Samuel is told, this is the one and the spirit of the Lord comes mightily upon him. We're told, too, that David is handsome; but it isn't by outward appearance that God has chosen David. It is by looking on his heart that the choice is made. Outward appearance is never the real story.

Contemplate the "ground", the playing field on which many present-day choices and decisions are made. Status, looks, connections, possessions, wealth, power. We 21st century people thrive on immediate success, and significance. Jesus calls on patience, and with the Holy Spirit, we can be guided in our decision making, allow our failures and shortcomings to be teachers, come to understand that our common ground is holy ground.

What if you and I, as Jesus Followers, restorers, repairers of the breach, humbly participated in building Beloved Community as our Presiding Bishop Michael speaks to? Looking on hearts, the simple essence, rather than race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political party, worth based on what can be gained or status on the food chain, just may enhance one's vision. How grand might the "party" be, if all are invited, when conversation is encouraged and shared, when together, all of us, sow seeds of love, perceive another's heart, fear change less and humbly open ourselves trusting God, who will give us the courage to embrace life and face whatever comes.

Summer is almost upon us, the season is changing...I think, maybe, I'll take off my sandals and explore some holy ground...how about you?

Amen

Mjf 6-12-21

