

Repentance is Not Just a Lenten Thing

Third Week of Ordinary Time-January 15, 2017-Matthew 4: 12-23

The message that Jesus has for us this week is quite simple. **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** In other words, the action of changing one’s life is not reserved for a specific time during our liturgical year, but rather, it is a call to action every day. Repentance is not just a Lenten thing. Repentance should be a daily activity of aligning ourselves, morning and night, to the will of God.

John the Baptist outlined a call to conversion and belief in Christ last week. This week, Jesus embarks on his mission to call the world to follow. The reason is very simple, **“... the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death, light has arisen.”**

What darkness do you sit in these days? Is it an estranged relationship in the family, at work or in the midst of friends? It is a lack of trust in God? Is there a darkness of lifestyle or purpose? Do you find that the darkness of winter can lead to a darkness of heart and soul resulting in a lack of generosity and joy to others?

Jesus calls two sets of brothers to a new way of living this week. **“As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men. At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John....He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.”**

Is it possible that following Christ might dispel the darkness in my own life, my own heart? Could a call to follow Christ be the way to find goodness and joy? Is it possible that following Christ might make the world better?

Might this light of Christ help us to end abortions? Might it compel us to work to provide health care for all? Might Christ’s light propel us to work to end hunger, to stop violence and war? Might the illuminating light of Christ empower us to end the darkness of racism and religious persecution? Is it possible that Christ’s light is shining on the need of immigrants and refugees across the world, waiting for our generous response?

We can only do these things if we repent and follow the light of Christ. The darkness that we encounter is of our own making. To realign ourselves toward God, allows us to find and live our first vocation which is being followers (baptized Christians) of Christ. Then and only then can we follow in his steps in **“...proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.”** Repentance is not just a Lenten thing. It is something for every day of our lives.

Blessings!



Sue Schettler, PLC