

RENEW: REORIENT

January 20, 2018

Rev. Dr. Jerry Shepard



Micah 6:6-8

⁶ 'With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,
with calves a year old?
⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of
rams,
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my
transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?'
⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Luke 9:23-25

²³ Then he said to them all, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. ²⁵What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?

PRAY

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled, as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal
life.
Amen.

- St. Francis of Assisi

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Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. What do you think is behind Micah's comments about worship practices?
3. Explain what Micah said God wants from worshippers.
4. Where do you see Christians doing justice?
5. What does it take to follow Jesus?
6. What does Jesus mean when he said we must deny ourselves?
7. Name a cross you felt on your shoulders and what you did about it.
8. How does one lose themselves while seeking to save themselves?

PRAY

May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

And the blessing of God the Supreme Majesty and our Creator, Jesus Christ the Incarnate Word who is our brother and Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Guide, be with you and remain with you this day forevermore. Amen.

- *Benedictine Sister Ruth Fox
of Sacred Heart Monastery*

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