

Advent Reflections

December 11, 2019



My first, cursory reading of the assignment I was given seemed to be one of admonishment – God is telling us to “buck up” and not be babies, to carry our load so to speak. This kind of preaching does not sit well with me. It is reminiscent of my early introduction to religion – the Old Testament God I learned about was stern and vengeful. As I got to the end, the part where it speaks of young people growing weary and faint, I thought maybe what is being said is that the young do not have the stamina and experience to withstand the trials of life and, even though age is not mentioned, those of us with a few years to our credit can cope better. With experiences come grey hair and patience. Maybe I’m just reading in what I want to hear, but isn’t our internalization of the Bible what it is all about? Don’t the words speak to each of us as we need them to?

The Gospel, on the other hand, is not so much telling us to get tougher but it is encouraging us to share burdens; to lighten our loads. Jesus is offering to help us with our problems. It does not matter to Him who we are or what we do, He is there for everyone. While Jesus cannot physically help us, we certainly can learn from his loving kindness. We can reach out to each other whether it is for help or to give help and we can then make each other’s burdens light.

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Reading 1 [IS 40:25-31](#)

To whom can you liken me as an equal?
says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high
and see who has created these things:
He leads out their army and numbers them,
calling them all by name.
By his great might and the strength of his power
not one of them is missing!
Why, O Jacob, do you say,
and declare, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?

Do you not know
or have you not heard?
The LORD is the eternal God,
creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint nor grow weary,
and his knowledge is beyond scrutiny.
He gives strength to the fainting;
for the weak he makes vigor abound.
Though young men faint and grow weary,
and youths stagger and fall,
They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength,
they will soar as with eagles' wings;
They will run and not grow weary,
walk and not grow faint.

Responsorial Psalm [PS 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 AND 10](#)

R.(1) O bless the Lord, my soul!

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
and all my being, bless his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

He pardons all your iniquities,
he heals all your ills.
He redeems your life from destruction,
he crowns you with kindness and compassion.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.
Not according to our sins does he deal with us,

nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

Alleluia

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Behold, the Lord comes to save his people;
blessed are those prepared to meet him.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel [MT 11:28-30](#)

Jesus said to the crowds:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened,
and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
for I am meek and humble of heart;
and you will find rest for yourselves.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."