

Homily for 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

Rejoice! For today you get a break. I have abbreviated my reflections so that we can have a communion meditation that continues my theme.

Last Saturday a presenter asked our senior sisters to watch a video counting the number of times the basketball was tossed between two people. When the clip was over the presenter asked what else was in the video. Not one person saw the gorilla dressed in a suit that came to the center of the frame, beat on his chest and left. Everyone was focused on one thing and missed the bigger picture.

In the morning's Gospel, John the Baptizer, takes time to see, he sees the bigger picture. He sees Jesus walking toward him and says "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." He recognizes Jesus for who He is. At first John did not know who he was. Later he says: "I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God." John saw. He had a vision of what the world was waiting for and he was helping people to prepare for it. He knew what had to change in people's lives, he knew what wasn't right and what did not sit well with the vision of God. He was all about the "Reign of God" and he gave all he had, all he was, and his very self for that Reign of God. Why else would John go out to live an austere life, live in a very difficult environment, fast, and give up all that is comfortable? Why else would he risk stirring up dust that would eventually cause him trouble with the authorities? Why else would he lay down his life if it were not for the vision of the Reign of God?

We know the answers are the same when it comes to Jesus, who left the quiet, secure village life in Nazareth to begin a life that will put him in a danger zone where secular and religious authority will be united against him. We know why he left the region of Galilee and headed South on a 3 day journey to see that prophet in the wilderness. Jesus was about fulfilling God's saving plan.

This weekend we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Martin Luther King, JR.'s, "I Have a Dream Speech" in Washington, DC, under the Lincoln Memorial. He was another prophet who saw the whole picture, who knew what had to happen. He had a dream, a vision of what could be. He knew that prejudice, injustice, poverty were not of the Reign of God. He, like John the Baptist, like Jesus, gave all he was, all he had, his very self for that Reign to come closer to humanity.

We all know the vision, for we, each one of us, has the seeds of that vision deep within us. "Here is my servant" says Isaiah. You are also the servant of the Reign of God. Why else are you here?

"I have endowed him with my spirit" says Isaiah. You have been endowed with the same Spirit.

"That he may bring true justice to the nations," says Isaiah. That you may bring true justice to those who hunger, those lacking adequate housing, to those who are shut out by this wealthy nation, to those need medical care, to those who are abused and caught in violence. John, Jesus, Martin Luther, prayed before every action on behalf of bringing forth a just world. Pray will show each of us what is ours to do.

As that prophet, the Rev. Martin Luther King said 50 years ago: "Now is the time to make justice ring for all of God's children." AMEN? Amen!