

July 15, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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LOVE AND LIGHT!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Excerpts From Today's First Reading and Gospel

Excerpt from the First Reading:

But Joseph replied to them: "Have no fear. Can I take the place of God? Even though you meant harm to me, God meant it for good, to achieve his present end, the survival of many people. Therefore, have no fear. I will provide for you and for your children." By thus speaking kindly to them, he reassured them.

GENESIS 50:19-21

Excerpt from the Gospel:

"Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?"

Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father."

MATTHEW 10:26-32

Reflection

The first reading and the Gospel for today afford us the opportunity to reflect on forgiveness, reconciliation, and moving past our fears. In the first reading, it is all about Joseph and his brothers who had "treated him so cruelly." Rather than feeling vengeful, an all-too-common human emotion, Joseph forgives them and reassures his brothers that he will care for them. Joseph's faith allows him to move past a knee-jerk response of vengeance to, instead, point the way to God through his response. This is such a deep and abiding lesson for each of us to take in, since our culture is saturated with messages of hate and revenge.

In Matthew's Gospel, the message is once again about letting God be God in terms of judgement. We are to share the message of a loving God who cares deeply about all of creation. We are encouraged to set aside any fears that impede our ability to live fully the life God has created in us.

When I reflect on these two scriptures from today's readings, I'm left with the gift of knowing God's love ever more deeply. I'm also given the clear message of being light in our world, rather than seeking to tear down and destroy -- no matter how harsh life can be at any time.



Le Puy-en-Velay, France
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- How do these readings challenge you to turn from seeking retribution or vengeance when harm comes your way?
 - If you can recall a time in your life when you were able to forgive and respond in kindness, hold this memory for a moment and give thanks for the Spirit's movement in your life.
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For Prayer

*O gentle and kind Creator,
may we imitate Your ways and turn from those that cause further harm.
May we remember what You speak to us in the darkness
and speak it in the light.
May we treasure what we hear whispered from You
and proclaim it on the housetops of our lives.
May we receive the grace needed to be men and women
of reconciliation, kindness, and love.
Amen.*

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