



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

Image by Christine Sponchia from Pixabay

LEAVE THE LAND OF YOUR KINSFOLK

By Sr. Christine Hilliard, CSJ

From Today's First Reading

The LORD said to Abram: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you." Abram went as the LORD directed him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. Abram took his wife, Sarai, his brother's son Lot, all the possessions that they had accumulated, and the persons they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land as far as the sacred place at Shechem, by the terebinth of Moreh. (The Canaanites were then in the land.) The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So Abram built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel, pitching his

tent with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. He built an altar there to the LORD and invoked the LORD by name. Then Abram journeyed on by stages to the Negeb.

GENESIS 12:1-9

Reflection

With the invitation and promise to Abram, the book of Genesis moves from the history of all humanity to an individual person, soon to become a family, then a tribe, and finally a nation. The choice of Abram is a mystery resting only on God's initiative. Notably the promise is dominated by the word "bless," indicating that what God offers Abram will be a sign of divine favor and a source of happiness. And even more, the effects of the promise move beyond Abram: "All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you." It came to be understood that Israel would be a mediator of God's blessing to the whole world.

There is no indication of Abram's motive for obeying God's command to pack up and leave the land of his kinsfolk. The narrative simply states: "Abram went as the LORD directed him." We see that this becomes basic to his life as his story continues.



People in the desert at sunset
Photo by Eugenio Felix

For Pondering

- Recall a time in your life when you knew God was asking you to let go of what was known to you and journey to a place unknown to you. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about God?
 - Who or what mediates God's blessings in your life? For whom or what do you mediate blessings? What does all of that tell you about God?
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For Prayer

*Dear God.
Let my heart
grasp
the profound wisdom
with which you created
the world.
Help me understand
that life's difficulties
are in fact her opportunities;
life's endings
are also her beginnings;
life's disappointments
are her finest teachers.*

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