



The Word...

“Brothers and sisters: I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.”
(1 Cor 11:23-26)

Pondering the Word ...

“Do this in remembrance of me.” What is Jesus telling the disciples? What is he telling us?

The late Sulpician biblical scholar Fr. Addison Wright explains that in ancient Semitic languages, the word translated “memory” or “remembrance” was not so much about remembering a past event as it was about making the event real in the present. I think of couples celebrating wedding anniversaries. Yes, they are commemorating the day of their marriage, but even more so, they revel in the love they share today which we pray continues to grow and flourish, a love made new.

Another scholar, Rev. Dr. Joe Jensen explains: “For Jews celebrating the Passover, it is not reflecting on what God did back then (in Egypt) but on the experience of that event now.” He refers to Deuteronomy 5:3: “*The LORD, our God, made a covenant with us at Horeb; not with our ancestors did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, all of us who are alive here this day.*” Rev. Jensen continues: “What gets translated as, ‘*Do this in memory of me,*’ in the minds of Jesus’ disciples hearing him speak would be, ‘*Do this to make me present.*’”

Living the Word...

My book club is reading *The Eucharist and Social Justice*, by Dr. Sr. Margaret Scott, ACJ (2009, Paulist Press). It is opening the eyes and minds and hearts of all of us, presenting a greatly expanded, universal look at the Eucharist and its inherent tie to social justice. Though written by a Catholic, it can speak to anyone who follows the teachings of Jesus and who wants to go deeper into the real meaning of communion.

How do you see the Eucharist or Holy Communion? Is it a commemorative event or is it real today? Do you have a sense of the global eucharistic community and call that the Eucharist proclaims? The meaning of Jesus’ words that night likely did not become real to the disciples until they experienced his suffering and their own fear; his resurrection and their own joy; and finally, the gift of his Spirit on Pentecost and their own call: “*Go out and make disciples.*” Make me present!

This is our call as well. If we just leave Jesus behind at our communal table, we’ve missed the whole point. How will you make Christ present today, especially in the lives of the poor and oppressed?

Personal Reflections and Ideas ...

Mon, Jun 20: *"You have rocked the country and split it open; repair the cracks in it, for it is tottering.... Give us aid against the foe, for worthless is the help of men."* (Ps 60)

The country is split open, tottering. That about sums it up in the US, I guess. But it is not God who has rocked the country. *"Give us aid against the foe"*....What foe? In the immortal words of Pogo cartoonist, Walt Kelly, *"We have met the enemy and it is us."* **Reflection/Provision:** This psalm speaks of tribalism. The Hebrews expected God to be on their side, "going forth with their armies." I've heard this expression used in the culture wars and religious divisions today: *"We have God on our side!"* How haughty is that to presume God's preference! Is there someone with whom you don't see eye-to-eye on the issues of the day? Be a "repairer of the breach" (Is 58:12). Invite them to have a civil, peaceful listening session where each gets to talk without interruption or debate. If things start to get heated, call a time-out. Step back and regroup. Try to find common ground.

Tue, Jun 21: *"How narrow the gate and the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few."* (Mt 7:6, 12-14)

Reflection/Provision: *"My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, You will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen."* (Thomas Merton, from *Thoughts on Solitude*, p. 79)

Wed, Jun 22: *"I have found the book of the law in the temple of the LORD."* (2 Kgs 22:8-13; 23:1-3)

You know those TV shows where new owners are remodeling an old house and find something valuable hidden in the walls or under junk in the attic? That's what's happening in this story. After several years of evil kings and false gods cluttering up the temple, Josiah (a good king) wants the place cleaned up and repaired. Lo and behold, the high priest uncovers the book of the law! It appears no one has the foggiest notion of what's in the book, and kudos to Josiah for stepping up immediately and putting things right with the Lord! **Reflection/ Provision:** Are other gods "cluttering up" your relationship with God? The stuff of everyday life piled on top and in the way of how you want to live? Too much baggage for you to get back to basics? Spend time today in prayer moving some things out of the way. Find a treasure hidden in the words of Scripture.

Thu, Jun 23: *"...prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched...investigating the time and circumstances that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated..."* (1 Pt 1:8-12) This verse says the Spirit of Christ was 'within' the prophets of old. We know Wisdom was with God from the beginning, but these words bring the Trinity into clearer focus. **Reflection/ Provision:** I've been reading books about the Cosmic Christ. Now this may sound contradictory to "the basics" we talked about yesterday, but we know from John's Gospel that the Word -- the Logos of God -- was there in the beginning. The Spirit of Christ, the Anointed One, has been and is alive and active, made human for period in history, but existing forever. The future the prophets foretold is still unfolding. Pay attention. See if you can catch a glimpse of Christ's Spirit at work and present today.

Fri, Jun 24: *"...We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life."* (Rom 5:5b-11) Paul is referring here to Christ's risen life as bringing us even closer to God, but I think it can refer to his ministerial life as well. We are reconciled to God even more when we model our lives after that of God's son. **Reflection/ Provision:** What aspects of Jesus' life speak the clearest to you? How do you best follow his example? Where is Jesus inviting you to explore his life and ways more deeply?

Sat, Jun 25: *"Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord; Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your little ones who faint from hunger at the corner of every street."* (Lam 2: 2, 10-14, 18-19)

I read an article today about a Somali woman who left home with three of her eight children to seek food and water. The title of the article is "We buried him and kept walking," referring to her three-and-a-half-year-old son who died along the way. The words from Amos ring in my ears: **Reflection/ Provision:** *"Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land...Never will I forget a thing you have done!"* (Am 8:4, 7) *Never will I forget what you didn't do!* We are all culpable in societal sins of omission. What will you do today?