



PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee July 2024

The Time after Pentecost

By S. Carla Mae Streeter

This is what we used to call it, remember...? Now we refer to this time as Ordinary Time. But there is something special about the former label. It was a reference to Spirit time. But it didn't specify what the Spirit was up to. In both references, we need to ponder what the Spirit is doing in this time after Pentecost, this Ordinary Time.

Most of those reading this reflection are baptized...but long ago. We need to be reminded that we are still in formation. The time after the big feasts, the time after Pentecost is the time for ongoing formation in discipleship. We are far from being "done." Rather, we are either just beginning, for we are in the middle of something we are trying to figure out about this discipleship business. That's why the Sunday readings are so important. Dear Great-Grandmother Church gathers us around and has something to tell us each Sunday. If we listen up, we advance in our formation, our mystagogy. If we just come and go, or if we don't even gather with the community, we don't advance...we more or less tread water...we just keep doing the old tried and true. Maybe we don't even know we are in formation.

July is usually quite a hot month here in the Midwest. We are in the midst of summer gatherings and travels. It is in the midst of this "off" time that the formation goes on, for this time brings its own challenges to our faith-life. It's a green time. Growth is everywhere. The rains have made everything lush green, and the corn is higher than usual. This is our clue. This time is about growth. The Spirit is about "Sonning" us. Yes, the coming and the giving of one's self is growing in us. We are living from the Paschal Mystery...we are practicing dying and rising. Each Sunday in July brings us a growth-challenge. Ask yourself what it is each week. May you become lush green and fruitful.

*My living Lord, Ever greening in me by the power of your Spirit,
Give me the courage to speak what I believe in hope...
Even if it falls on deaf ears.
Call me aside to take a deep Spirit-breath and go on.
Feed us with your very self...dying and rising in us...
Be our bread broken and shared.*

Thank you to S. Gayle Bogdanowitz for this month's reflections

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 6: 6

“He was amazed at their lack of faith.” Jesus is startled by the reception he receives when teaching in his native place. His people, his own kin do not honor him. Consequently, Jesus is unable to bring light and healing. Their minds...their hearts are closed. Are our hearts closed to Jesus? We pray for the grace of faith that opens our hearts for Jesus' healing touch.

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 6: 12

“Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” Jesus continues teaching. He is addressing his disciples now. Yet can we today hear Jesus strong admonishment precisely as prescribing a spiritual framework for all of us? Jesus can be referencing our teaching and preaching. We need to keep the mind of Christ. We need to shake free from worldly prejudices and attitudes. We must adopt the mind of Christ.

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 6: 31

“Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” These caring words are addressed to disciples Jesus now calls his apostles. They are just returning to him after their missionary journey, bringing reports of works well done. Can you imagine their joy? Today, Jesus asks all his beloved to come away with him and rest. May we all be able to rest in the joyful experience of quiet contemplation with Jesus.

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time | John 6: 1-15

Our Gospel story here features the miracle of Jesus feeding five thousand people from five loaves of bread and two fish. One of my early teachers entitled this pericope, “The Barley Boy.” Her interpretation was uncomplicated yet profound. Jesus did not actually multiply the food. Jesus effectively encouraged the thousands of people to share their food. And, the crowd had all they wanted with plenty of leftovers. Pray today's world recognizes the benefits of sharing.

