

Trinity News

Pentecost III Small Beginnings and Massive outcomes

The central focus of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth was about the Reign of God. He used parables as his chief means of teaching, stories that used local content to link heaven and earth. The main theme of the stories was what he called the Reign of God. This was not some static heaven poised above the earth, but the actual unfolding of God's presence on earth in concrete historical events.

As Rabbi Cooper said, God is a Verb, and the reign of God is Verbal as the great Latin American liberation theologian Juan Luis Segundo used to say. That is, the Reign of God unfolds into unexpected, startling, and revolutionary aspects of luminous presence that lighten the dark corners of our mucky history.

Jesus was a great believer in the multitude of tiny contributions that foster human relationships. The parables of the seed growing secretly and mustard seed sprouting in the Gospel of Mark speak of those subtle things that spring from tiny beginnings and create masterpieces of achievement in human affairs and luminous love glistening in relationships.

The Scriptures contain an enormous range of images and pictures. We can look at them in the written word, but they have far greater effect when they become part of our interior design of meaning. The mother of Jesus appeared to me recently in the light of an oil lamp in inner reflections. She was dressed in grey with white trim, darker than I thought she would be and of course the eyes full of luminous love.

We try speaking to the dead at our peril. But those who have been touched by the supernatural remain in our conversations. Mary was called first among saints in our first Prayer Book in 1549. She carried Jesus within her and she carried him into the temple to dedicate him. She carried glory in her arms and he was met by Glory. I cannot meditate on God without pictures. When I meditate with Mary it is in the glow of an oil lamp in her home. When I meditate with Jesus it is with the picture of him breaking the surface of the water after being baptised by John in the Jordan River and the water pouring down over his shoulders like an anointing seal, with the Dove winging its way from heaven.

Supernatural figures never lose the capacity to communicate. I write down the words from them that thread into my mind, such as Jesus saying that he used to sit and look at his mother and sometimes see her face illuminated with the glow of God's presence. She told him that it was like that when the Angel Gabriel came to her home in Nazareth. I have written words about his appreciation of her coming to him as a child at night in the dark and calming his fears with her distinctive voice and most of all with a touch of her hand.

I saw a young priest yesterday and we recalled how when I was his rector he cried on my shoulder before a service one day until he wet that part of my robe. We remembered that moment and his loneliness since his wife left him. It was so wonderful to see vibrant life in his face again and his enjoyment of his present position. He told me that I had saved his sanity and his life at that time, and then I felt emotional! Just a little thing, and the relationship still grows!

Bishop Arthur Jones

Next Week's Readings:

- Job 38:1-11,16-18;
- Psalm 107
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-21
- Mark 4:35-41

Advance Notice:

Vestry Meeting, June 25th (Monday)