

The Journey- Bringing Christ to Others

Micah 5:1-4a
Psalm 80
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

An older married couple was driving down the highway when another car passed them. The woman noticed that the occupants in the other car were young and obviously in love; the girl was sitting very close to her man as they cruised down the highway. The older woman began thinking about how romantic she and her husband were in the early years of their marriage and wondered where such closeness had gone. Finally, she said asked her husband, “Do you remember when we used to sit right next to one another like that young couple? Where did such closeness go, honey?” From the driver’s seat her husband quietly replied, “I haven’t moved....”

For several weeks now we’ve been looking at various aspects of our journey with Christ. Up until now, our focus has been on how our journey with Christ helps to transform *us* and deepen our understanding of ourselves, God, and our situation. This week, our Gospel reading reminds us that our journey with Christ is not only meant to be a blessing to each of us, but for others as well. In order for our journey with Christ to be a blessing for others, it must not be a parallel-but-separate journey (like the older couple in the car), but rather, an intimate union. In other words, our journey with Christ is ultimately directed toward our becoming *one* with Him, and our oneness with Christ helps reveal Him to the world.

In our Gospel reading today, we heard about the intimate union Mary had with Christ— she was literally pregnant with Him. Because of that intimate union, Elizabeth and John both experienced God in an amazing way. Mary’s journey with Christ moved beyond something that just transformed *her* and it became something that transformed the people around her, so much so that John joyfully leapt in his mother’s womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit!¹

As we grow in our intimacy with Christ while journeying with Him, we move closer and closer to becoming one with Him and God is able to use us more and more to bless other people. During the beginning stages of our journey with Christ the focus is more on just the two of us, but as we mature in our journey with Christ the focus is directed more toward others. This can manifest itself in many different ways.

An example of how our intimate journey with Christ can be a blessing for others might be the pregnant couple who is growing in their awareness of how their pregnancy is a very specific journey with Christ. Eventually, they will understand that the journey is not just about the two of them and their baby, but also an invitation to pray for other pregnant couples, to pray for unborn children, to pray for a greater respect for life, to intercede for couples who can’t conceive, and to be open to sharing their own struggles and successes with other people going through something similar. In this way, the pregnant couple’s deepening journey with Christ naturally becomes less about them and more about how God is using them to bring Christ to others.

¹ Luke 1:41

Another example is the couple who is suffering from marital problems. If they keep the eyes of their hearts focused on Christ during the “storm,” and guard against letting their marriage struggles make them self-centered and self-preoccupied, then God will use His journey with them as an opportunity to intercede for other couples who are going through difficult times and maybe even use their personal story as an encouragement to other couples on the verge of divorce.

Like Mary, or like the young couple in the car who stayed close to one another, our intimate journey with Christ can be a wonderful blessing to others.

SUGGESTED PRAYER EXERCISES:

- ✚ Read Luke 1:39-56. After familiarizing yourself with the layout of the story, write your own Gospel story, using an actual event in your life and how God used you to bring Christ to another person. Include in your story the people’s response to Christ being brought to them, as well as your own version of Mary’s canticle.

- ✚ Genesis 5:24 tells us that “Enoch walked with God, and he was no longer here, for God took him.” The intimacy that Enoch shared with God was deep and beautiful. In this passage his intimacy with God is connected to his death. It reminds us that the closer you and I walk with God, the more we must die-to-self and let God take us. In your current walk with God, how is He inviting you to die-to-self so as to live for Him and others?