



Daily Reflections

August 4, 2018

Scripture

Matthew 14: 1-12

Herod the tetrarch heard of the reputation of Jesus and said to his servants, "This man is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him." Now Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, for John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." Although he wanted to kill him, he feared the people, for they regarded him as a prophet. But at a birthday celebration for Herod, the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests and delighted Herod so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests who were present, he ordered that it be given, and he had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. His disciples came and took away the corpse

and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.

Our Scripture Reflection

You've heard the old saying, "No good deed goes unpunished." While that statement is not true for everyone, it certainly applies to John the Baptist. All he wanted to do was save the soul of King Herod who was breaking a commandment by living in an openly adulterous relationship. In calling Herod and his partner to task he incurred the wrath of Herodias who was embarrassed by John's preaching and wanted him dead. Witnessing to the Truth cost John his life in this world but he gained life in eternity. What are you willing to sacrifice for the Truth?

Food for your Journey

Between a tyrant and a martyr there is of course an enormous difference, although they both have one thing in common: the power to compel. The tyrant, himself ambitious to dominate, compels people through his power; the martyr, himself unconditionally obedient to God, compels others through his suffering. The tyrant dies and his rule is over, the martyr dies and his rule begins.

--Søren Kierkegaard, *The Soul of Kierkegaard: Selections from His Journals* (Courier Corporation, 2012), 151.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, By living my faith in You there are times when I am asked to stand up for You. Lord, that can be stressful and difficult. Who wants to make enemies? You Lord, however, gave everything for me. That's how much You love me! Help me during my times of weakness when it's easier to give in rather than to stand up. May I never miss an opportunity to show my love for and faith in You. Amen