



Daily Reflection

November 7, 2018

Scripture

Luke 14: 25-33

Great crowds were traveling with Jesus,
and he turned and addressed them,

"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother,
wife and children, brothers and sisters,
and even his own life,
he cannot be my disciple.

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me
cannot be my disciple.

Which of you wishing to construct a tower
does not first sit down and calculate the cost
to see if there is enough for its completion?

Otherwise, after laying the foundation
and finding himself unable to finish the work
the onlookers should laugh at him and say,

'This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.'

Or what king marching into battle would not first sit down
and decide whether with ten thousand troops
he can successfully oppose another king
advancing upon him with twenty thousand troops?

But if not, while he is still far away,

he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms.

In the same way,

everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple."

Our Scripture Reflection

Did Jesus really want us to hate our family members? Of course not! Jesus was sinless. Once again, we encounter one of those occasions when English does not convey the intent of the Hebrew language that He spoke. There were no superlatives in Hebrew, no way of saying something is greater when compared with something else. To make up for this, He uses the word hate. In our Gospel reading, Jesus' intention is to say that we must love Him MORE THAN (=hate) all others. Jesus uses the examples of a man constructing a tower and a king considering going into battle to caution would-be disciples. Before one says "Yes" to following Our Lord, think, calculate, estimate....discern prayerfully. In other words, one must ask of oneself, "What am I willing to give in order to commit to Jesus?" True discipleship is not meant for the conflicted or those who lack determination and resolve.

Food for your Journey

Do not depend on the hope of results. When you are doing the sort of work you have taken on, essentially an apostolic work, you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect.

As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself. And there, too, a great deal has to be gone through, as gradually you struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. The range tends to narrow down, but it gets much more real. In the end, it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything

All the good that you do will come not from you but from the fact that you have allowed yourself, in the obedience of faith, to be used for God's love. Think of this more and gradually you will be free from the need to prove yourself, and you can be more open to the power that will work through you without your knowing it.

— Thomas Merton, in a February 21, 1966, letter to friend Jim Forest, in *Thomas Merton: A Life in Letters*, (Harper One, 2008).

A Prayer From The Heart

Dear Jesus, I want to be Your disciple. I want to love You more than anyone and anything. Help me, Lord, with Your Grace to pick up my Cross and follow in Your footsteps. If I become weak or trip up, strengthen me. Amen