



Daily Reflections

December 29, 2018

Scripture

Luke 2: 22-35

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: "Lord, now let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation
which you prepared in the sight of every people,
a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him;
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
“Behold, this child is destined
for the fall and rise of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be contradicted
(and you yourself a sword will pierce)
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Our Scripture Reflection

I LOVE this scene. Through the years as I picture it in my mind, the characters and what they say, I chuckle and also feel the power behind the passage. There they are, Mary and Joseph carrying the newborn Baby Jesus out of the Temple area after His circumcision and dedication ceremony when they encounter a crusty old Prophet named Simeon. He has been praying most of his life for some sign from God that He would bring salvation to His people. And as soon as he sees the Baby....Bam! He tells the unsuspecting parents that their little bundle of joy is going to cause a huge explosion, figuratively speaking. He is going to be The Great Disrupter. Because of His teaching and the way He lives His life, He will force people to make a decision for or against the Kingdom of God. They will be given the freedom to choose life or death, and some, especially the proud, the haughty, the arrogant and self-consumed, will not look kindly upon Him. Yes, wrapped ever so lovingly in a warm cozy blanket and being held in His adoring Mother’s arms, is a package of spiritual dynamite! How ironic yet how true. Jesus challenges us this very day to be for or against Him. How will you choose?

Food for your Journey

Calvin Miller writes in *The Table of Inwardness* of an antique wooden dynamite box in his home. Crafted in the 19th century, the box was built to withstand the shock of moving its contents from the manufacturer to the field.

On the lid of the box were large red and black letters which read: "Danger! Dynamite!"

"But the last I saw it," Miller wrote, "it was filled with common paraphernalia that could be found in any workroom."

How many of us, designed by God to store and release tremendous creative energies, have settled for collecting "common paraphernalia" and are discharging scarcely any spiritual dynamite?

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, A new year is quickly approaching and I have yet to discern my resolutions. Lord, help me to see in today's Gospel text the perfect resolution. May I choose to follow You and to live Your Gospel faithfully in 2019.

And if I should stumble or fall, pick me up and set me straight, Lord. Amen