



Daily Reflections

February 3, 2019

Scripture

Luke 4: 21-30

Jesus began speaking in the synagogue, saying:
"Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."
And all spoke highly of him
and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.
They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?"
He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb,
'Physician, cure yourself,' and say,
'Do here in your native place
the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.'"
And he said, "Amen, I say to you,
no prophet is accepted in his own native place.
Indeed, I tell you,
there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah
when the sky was closed for three and a half years
and a severe famine spread over the entire land.
It was to none of these that Elijah was sent,
but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon.
Again, there were many lepers in Israel
during the time of Elisha the prophet;
yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."
When the people in the synagogue heard this,
they were all filled with fury.

They rose up, drove him out of the town,
and led him to the brow of the hill
on which their town had been built,
to hurl him down headlong.
But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away.

Our Scripture Reflection

What in the world was there in Jesus' words which caused the mood of the hometown crowd to shift from amazement and delight to complete rage?? In using two examples from the lives of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha, He challenges the very core of the crowd's thinking. They expected God and His messengers to act according to their expectations. But Jesus is telling them that God's messengers act according to His will. Bottom line: We cannot box in. God is free to act as He pleases after all, He is God and we are not. The posture of the true disciple is to be humble and open to God and His way. We must truly pray, "Thy will be done" and mean it.

Food for your Journey

Flannery O'Connor was once asked why, in her short-story fiction, she created such freakish characters. She responded, "To the almost blind, you must draw very large, and to the almost deaf, you must shout loud."

—Mark A. Buchanan, "Rabbit trails to God," Christianity Today, July 2003, 44.

Like most schools, Princeton University has a strict code of conduct that demands respect for all members of the campus community. The code is rigidly enforced — except, that is, when it comes to one group: Christians. Bigotry against Christians, and particularly Catholics, is the last acceptable prejudice.

And that bigotry is on graphic display at Princeton's Bernstein Gallery, housed in the Woodrow Wilson School. Hanging on the walls is a collection called "Ricanstructions" by New York artist Juan Sanchez. To call this art offensive would be a spectacular understatement.

One piece depicts a torn image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Another features naked female torsos arranged in the shape of a cross. A third links together sacred Catholic devotional items under the title "Shackles of the AIDS Virus."

After viewing the works, Catholic students protested to Anne-Marie Slaughter, dean of the Wilson School. They explained why the art was so offensive — and asked her to remove it. After all, the art desecrates actual sacred objects like the cross. To their surprise, Slaughter acknowledged that she would probably not allow the school to sponsor art that desecrated, say, Muslim symbols. But instead of removing "Ricanstructions," Slaughter held a forum to let all sides — including the artist — have their say in the matter.

—Chuck Colson, "The last acceptable prejudice," June 11, 2003, Townhall Web Site, Townhall.com.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, Empty my heart of all arrogance and false pride. Please give me the Grace to surrender my life completely to You and to seek Your way above all. Amen