



Daily Reflections

June 2, 2019

Scripture

Acts 1: 1-11

In the first book, Theophilus,
I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught
until the day he was taken up,
after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit
to the apostles whom he had chosen.
He presented himself alive to them
by many proofs after he had suffered,
appearing to them during forty days
and speaking about the kingdom of God.
While meeting with them,
he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem,
but to wait for "the promise of the Father
about which you have heard me speak;
for John baptized with water,
but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."
When they had gathered together they asked him,
"Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"
He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons
that the Father has established by his own authority.
But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you,
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,
throughout Judea and Samaria,

and to the ends of the earth."

When he had said this, as they were looking on,
he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.

While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going,
suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them.

They said, "Men of Galilee,

why are you standing there looking at the sky?

This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven

will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven."

Our Scripture Reflection

If I could offer one word to serve as a theme for the Acts of the Apostles, that word would be "Action". Immediately after the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples at Pentecost, they take off, energized, to spread the Gospel to "the ends of the earth". Nothing....hunger, imprisonment, rejection, persecution, will deter them from their God-giving mission. And thanks to the Holy Spirit, their mission is accomplished in the most remarkable of ways. If you want to have your faith energized, read and pray the Acts.

Food for your Journey

It's a scene you'll see on many an interstate-highway journey. There you are, breezing down the road at 65. Suddenly you see red brake-lights up ahead. A lot of red brake-lights.

You brake too. It's a traffic jam. Everything's come to a dead stop. The interstate highway, marvel of modern engineering, has become a humble parking lot.

After a time, the traffic slowly begins to move. You creep forward. Finally you round a bend and you see something up ahead: an explanation, maybe, for the long delay. Flashing red lights. Lots of them.

Then you see a crumpled car or two, strewn at odd angles by the side of the road. An ambulance with its doors open. Paramedics grimly loading a stretcher into the back.

Then you see the state trooper, arm waving like a windmill. You don't need to hear her voice to know what she's saying: "Move along, move along, move along."

You're on your way again, except for your thoughts, which leapt out of your car back at the accident scene and are still roaming around back there. Your thoughts are hovering in the air, floating over that poor unfortunate, lying face-up on the stretcher. Alive or dead, who's to say?

It's a lamentable fact of modern life: the auto accident. Chances are, if you see one of those, you'll also witness a human behavior that's the bane of the highway patrol, and the cause of more tie-ups than the accident itself: the behavior known as "rubbernecking."

What's so riveting about an accident that evokes such curiosity -- such a fascination with the crumpled metal, the sparkling particles of windshield strewn like fallen stars across the asphalt, the dark puddle that's probably motor oil (but could be something else)? Probably not the accident itself. Very likely it's the sudden realization, amidst a long and tedious journey, that the boundary between life and death is not so far away as we may think. Suddenly, perceiving the flashing lights and the sputtering emergency flares, we remember our mortality.

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?" asks the angel, like a state trooper at an accident scene. The rubbernecking disciples, staring up at the clouds, feel that same fascination.

Eventually, though, they do more than merely watch. They go out and spread the good news. They serve as witnesses.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, I know that You have a mission for me to accomplish. And while I may not be called to a far off land, perhaps the most fertile of missionary territories lies within my own four walls, among my family. Keep me Holy, Lord, so that through my daily living I may give good and faithful witness to You. Amen