



Daily Reflections

November 9, 2016

Scripture

Philemon 7-20

Beloved:

I have experienced much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the holy ones have been refreshed by you, brother.

Therefore, although I have the full right in Christ to order you to do what is proper, I rather urge you out of love, being as I am, Paul, an old man, and now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus.

I urge you on behalf of my child Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment, who was once useless to you but is now useful to both you and me.

I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you.

I should have liked to retain him for myself, so that he might serve me on your behalf

in my imprisonment for the Gospel,
but I did not want to do anything without your consent,
so that the good you do might not be forced but voluntary.
Perhaps this is why he was away from you for a while,
that you might have him back forever,
no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a brother,
beloved especially to me, but even more so to you,
as a man and in the Lord.
So if you regard me as a partner, welcome him as you would me.
And if he has done you any injustice
or owes you anything, charge it to me.
I, Paul, write this in my own hand: I will pay.
May I not tell you that you owe me your very self.
Yes, brother, may I profit from you in the Lord.
Refresh my heart in Christ.

Our Scripture Reflection

The Letter to Philemon was written by Paul while he was in prison. He writes on behalf of a runaway slave named Onesimus to his master, Philemon. Paul had baptized Onesimus and was being cared for by him during his prison term. Paul knows that Onesimus must go back to his master and Paul wants to make sure that Philemon treats him with compassion. Paul does so by reminding Philemon that though civil law gives him rights over Onesimus, however, because of his status as a brother in Christ through baptism, he must be treated with dignity and respect, and especially, mercy. Paul sees Christian baptism as the great equalizer no matter what one's state or occupation in life may be.

Food for your Journey

Take a look at the insides of a laptop, a car engine or a Swiss watch. Consider all the different parts. Each one of these parts has a specific function. And every day, that little part does just what it was designed to do -- and nothing else.

Human beings are created by the Great Designer. But we're different than a computer chip or the piston in a car engine. We can do more than one

thing. We are gifted in many ways. Perhaps there are some things we do better than other things. But still, on the whole, we have a wide range of ways in which we can make the human community function and move and love as it should.

So, where might we start today?

Prayer from the Heart

Precious Lord, You gave Your life for us all. Help me to live as a brother (sister) to all people loving them unconditionally as You love them. Amen.