

February, 2017 Preparation Sheet

Theme for the year: Revisiting Wisdom at the Crossroads



Proverbs 8:1-4 (New Jerusalem Bible):

Is not Wisdom calling? Is not Understanding raising her voice? On the heights overlooking the road, at the [Crossroads], she takes her stand; by the gates, at the entrance to the city, on the access-roads, she cries out, 'I am calling to you, all people, my words are addressed to all humanity.'

February Focus: Wrestling with Wisdom at the Crossroads

First Reading: Luke 7: 18b-19 – [Are you really the Messiah?]

“The disciples of John told him about all these things [Jesus was doing]. John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord To ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?’ “

Note: John the Baptist had staked his credibility and integrity as a prophet on pointing to Jesus as the Messiah (to be considered true and credible prophet of the LORD, his prophecies had to be right). He began to doubt...did he pointed out the right man...he was caught in a dilemma ... a “double bind.” Jesus was not acting like the Messiah was expected to act. The question his disciples were to ask Jesus, “Are you the one who is to come [the Messiah] or do we look for another?” suggests the underlying internal conflict he was struggling or wrestling with, i.e., should he now disclaim Jesus as the Messiah? This was his great doubt... and he could not decide which course (which “road”) to follow. (The Daily Reader for Contemplative Living – Excerpts from Fr. Thomas Keating – Compiled by S. Stephanie Iachetta).

Second Reading: Genesis 32: 24-31 – [Jacob wrestles with God]

“After he had taken them across the stream and had brought

over all his possessions, Jacob was left there alone. Then some man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When the man saw that he could not prevail over him, he struck Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the hip socket was wrenched as they wrestled. The man then said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.' But Jacob said, I will not let you go until you bless me," What is your name?" the man asked. He answered, "Jacob." Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be spoken of as Jacob, but as Israel, because you have contended with divine and human beings and have prevailed.' Jacob then asked him, "Do tell me your name, please." He answered, "Why should you know my name?" With that, he bade him farewell. Jacob named the place Peniel,* because he had seen God face to face," ... [*explained as meaning, "the face of God"].

Note: Jacob's entire life was changed because he wrestled with God and he received God's blessing in the process.

Third Reading: Jonah 1:1-3:

"The word of the LORD came to Jonah, son of Amittai: Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and preach against it; for their wickedness has come before me. But Jonah made ready to flee to Tarshish, away from the LORD. He went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish, paid the fare, and went down in it to go with them to Tarshish, away from the LORD.

Note: Despite his attempts to escape the LORD, the LORD eventually caught up to Jonah, the reluctant prophet, who, while spending 3 days in the dark belly of a great fish, turned to the LORD God in prayer. The LORD God answered Jonah who expressed his deep gratitude to his God. Thereafter, Jonah was obedient and did what God asked him to do ... Which resulted in Nineveh's turning away from sin and its salvation from total destruction by God.

Focus Question: Are you or have you ever struggled or wrestled with Wisdom God? If so, what was the outcome of that experience ... or is it still a "work in progress" and you're still wrestling with Wisdom at the Crossroads?