

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle within us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy your consolations. May the words of my mouth, the meditations of all our hearts be pleasing in your sight O Lord, you who are rock, redeemer & Renewer of us all. Amen.

Grace and Peace be with you, dear Friends!

Last week we talked about questions... it's okay to have questions, it's okay to ask questions, and it's okay to not have answers to questions. As a life-long learner and teacher, I have as many questions now or more than I did as a school kid.

So, what's your question? LAST WEEK, I invited everyone to send to me their FAITH questions. Send them to my email... pastor.saintjames@verizon.net. Send them in by June 15. We will address them through a series this summer.

Today in our scriptures

Ps 20: A Prayer that seeks divine help for the 'monarch' of Israel (or any leader)... who should NOT focus on material 'wealth' & confidence in chariots and horses, but trust in the ways of God.

Mark 4: 26-34: Jesus has been demonstrating the kin-dom of God since calling the Disciples. This is how to live a life of faith in God.

Many times in scripture we think of those weak and marginalized persons as those who receive God's compassionate justice. This is true. Equally as true, however, are the numbers of persons who are perceived as weak, marginalized or outcast yet are chosen as active participants in serving God and God's purpose in history.

If you've been following the Thursday Bible Study lessons, then you know we've been studying Women in the Bible. Women have had little power or formal leadership through biblical history. Yet several women, and non-

jewish women, at that, are critical to the genealogy of Jesus... Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, for example. These are just a few of the 'little' people... nobodies, who made Jesus possible.

Even David was one of the little people... a lowly shepherd boy... who stepped forward to confront the Philistine with the 3 tools that he had... a stone, a slingshot & faith/trust in God.

The two women discussed in the study this week were Deborah & Jael. Both were critical to the success of Israel as a nation, one within Israel as a leader, one an 'outsider' (gentile). These are women who trusted in spiritual direction, even putting themselves at risk.

Faith calls people to risk themselves for the sake of others. This creates new lives and new communities.

I witnessed this as I traveled to the Hindu and Muslim villages in India... the health workers trying to bring hope to the families whose children had clubfoot. Without correction, these children and their families were destined to life as marginalized outcasts. With non-surgical intervention, these children and families are accepted and received as valuable members of the village.

Jesus speaks in parables using ordinary, everyday language. This helps to open the people and particularly the disciples to the work of God in them and through them. Sometimes it seems like Jesus is saying the same thing over and over in different directions. I wonder if He ever got tired.

I got a sense of this in 2020, through the summer of discontent with patterns of deaths, almost every week, of black and brown people at the hands of community servants of order and peace... the police. Take away all the media hype... the facts speak for themselves. HOLD ON... resist tuning out... The question is... how can one person or one group of people change that kind of pattern? In fact,

What might all these parables say to those of us who are impatient or discouraged as we work to overcome injustices such as racism, intolerance of LGBTQI+ or indifference to poverty?

Consider the progress of the past 100 years... 1921, 50 years – 1971... 25 years – 1996, or last year?

Is there a seed that has been growing? Is the seed still growing today?

The point is... God's Spirit has been at work through it all! ...In every age and every stage. And God's Spirit is still at work prompting, renewing, strengthening, and leading everyday people, like you & I.

Jesus demonstrated the kin-dom of God since calling the Disciples.

Jesus demonstrated how to live a life of faith in God... working to bring God's kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven.

How? Through... prayer... with working partners... in faith & love & justice & peace & healing & mission.

How will we live in faith & justice in light of this parable of seed, harvest, growth and new life?

May it be so! So be it. Amen.

Let us JOIN TOGETHER WITH THE LITURGIST, Edie Candee, AS SHE LEADS A ...

Prayer of Response

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