

Points to Help Homily Preparation from a JPIC Perspective

Readings of the 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Sunday, February 22, 2009

Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25

2 Cor 1:18-22

Mk 2:1-12

Central Idea: We believe in a God who surprises us by exceeding our expectations.

Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25

Reflecting on the experience of God's People in Exile, the author offers a reminder of God's fidelity expressed in extraordinary compassion.

2 Cor 1:18-22

Our "yes" to God is pale in comparison to God's "yes" to us.

Mk 2:1-12

Jesus healing and forgiveness exceeded the common expectations of the religious people of his time.

Message

God's compassion and reconciliation surpasses expectations. It evokes an experience of profound surprise. It is a demonstration of the God who heals and forgives.

Exceeded Expectations ----- A personal experience with the arts

I think that a memorable movie or play is one that celebrates a profound resolution or conclusion that exceeds expectations. Off hand, I can think of a few that I have seen: the *Color Purple*, *Cats*, or even *It's a Wonderful Life*. You might want to think of an experience that, artistically, has done that for you. The profound resolution demonstrates the power of reconciliation. For example, in *It's a Wonderful Life*, the main character, George Bailey, is a victim of dishonesty. He is unable to continue to finance his project of affordable housing and loans because his competitor and slum landlord, Mr. Potter, steals George's company's money. George is wallowing in self pity and anger. He is suicidal until a friendly angel, Clarence, reminds him of all the good he has done in his life. George then begins to deeply appreciate his life and all the good he has done. George comes back to the community only to find that they have collected enough money to cover the debt –and more!! In many ways, the people have imitated the charity that George has shown throughout his life. The closing scene is a celebration not only of the charity and integrity of George's life, but also of the fact that George's charity has become pervasive and transforming.

From a JPIC perspective

Relate a situation when simple charity and integrity has produced surprising results that exceeded your expectations. In the Gospel, Jesus not only healed the paralytic but forgave his sins. Jesus did more than what the people around him expected. I am personally very impressed when people in different parts of the world have demonstrated a willingness to forgive people who have done them harm; people who have oppressed them and maybe even killed their friends and relatives. This willingness to reconcile is indeed divine. It goes beyond conventional expectations. It is indicative of the God who always says "yes" to us, a faithful God who is consistently demonstrated by works of compassion. A God whose goodness always exceeds our expectations.

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