



July 2, 2023 Mt. 10: 37-42 & Genesis 22:1-14

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[Zoom Connection](#)

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Stone, Naomi. [Someone is looking for you](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Prophecy](#)

[Monastery Sunday Homilies](#) 7/2/17

ENTERING THE SCENE:

(Since this reading overlaps with last week's text, I am repeating the drawing today)

The caterpillar has little awareness of the process that will take it to the skies. It just goes about its way, following the instincts to trust the process of its life. Jesus challenges us in this text, to trust the process that he has revealed in and through his life and teachings. It too will bring us to our future in God's kingdom. We, however, will have to override our instincts / common sense that wants to limit our existence to branches and leaves, and reach out to the love that draws us into eternity. The only way to do this is to trust God's process.

Mt. 10:37-42

37 Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not **worthy** of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not **worthy** of me; 38 and anyone who does not take his **cross** and **follow** me is not **worthy** of me. 39

Whoever **finds** his life will **lose** it, and whoever **loses** his life for my sake will **find** it. 40 He who **receives** you **receives** me, and he who **receives** me **receives** the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who **receives** a **prophet** because he is a **prophet** will **receive** a **prophet's reward**, and anyone who **receives** a **righteous** man because he is a **righteous** man will **receive** a **righteous man's reward**. 42 And if anyone gives even a **cup of cold water** to one of these **little ones** because he is my **disciple**, I tell you the **truth**, he will **certainly** not **lose** his **reward**."

DISCUSSION QUESTION: When did you last have to lose something in order to gain something even more precious? What do you remember about that process?

PRAYER: Lord, this "world" wants me to believe that it contains all my possibilities. It cautions me that to live the "good" life I must obey its commands. This often comes in the form of "go along to get along" advice. At other times it advises me to do to others before I am done to. It appeals to logic, and most often makes "common sense". You, however, invite me into your realm of uncommon sense. You ask me to risk losing in order to gain everything. Help me to trust your words, and then give me the courage to follow them through. Amen.

WORD STUDY AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

WORTHY: Something is worthy when it has value or merit.

How do my choices reveal what I think is worthy?

FOLLOW: When you follow you go along with someone.

How is Jesus challenging me to follow him in this text today?

FIND /LOSE: This lesson helps you find that which you never want to lose, that is, the deep awareness of how much God loves you, and what that love is calling you into.

What gets in my way in the search for what I am missing?

RECEIVES: This word is used in several ways in this text: welcoming, hearing, being gifted or burdened.
Which one of these uses impressed me the most when I first heard/read the text? Why?

PROPHET: In the bible, a prophet is one who speaks for God.
Is Jesus speaking of himself as a prophet? Is he teaching that those who share the same understanding of God as he does is also a prophet? Am I a prophet?

REWARD: A reward is the outcome received for an action. It can be positive or negative.
What 'reward' do I receive for taking time with the scriptures? How does that compare when I do not take the time for reflection?

RIGHTEOUS: To be righteous is to be in right relationship with God, self and others.
How can I tell when someone is 'righteous'? How do I know when I am righteous?

CUP OF COLD WATER: In the part of the world where it is hot, and water is scarce, to receive a cup of cold water can be a lifesaving event.
In my world, what makes something similar to the 'cup of cold water' that Jesus is talking about? Have I ever given a 'cup of cold water'? Have I ever been given a 'cup of cold water'?

LITTLE ONES: Jesus uses this description often when he is referring to those who know their dependence on others for their wellbeing.
Who are the 'little ones' in my life? Am I a 'little one'? Do I resent it when I am a 'little one'? Can this text help me to re-imagine the role of being a 'little one'?

DISCIPLE: A disciple is one who is following a certain teacher or discipline.
How does studying scripture help me to become a disciple? What discipline does it take for me to set aside time for quiet reflection on the text?

LOSE: We lose when we are separated from something or someone that was part of our life.
Have I ever 'lost' the ability to discipline myself? What rewards did I lose when this happened?

TRUTH / CERTAINLY: We can only be certain when we know something to be true.
What truth have I discovered in this text/time of reflection? What helps me know that what I have discovered is something I can be certain of, or true?

PARALLEL TEXTS: Mt.10:37-38 // Lk: 14: 26-27; Gosp. of Thomas, Logia 55 & 101; Mt.10:40 // Lk. 10:16; Jn. 12:44-5; 13:20; Mt. 10:42 // Mt. 25:40; Mk. 9:41;

OTHER TEXTS OF THE WEEK: 2 Kgs. 4:8-11,14-16; Ps. 89: 2-3, 16-19; Rom. 6: 3-4, 8-11; Mt. 10:37-42; Revised Common Lectionary: Gn. 22: 1-14; Ps. 13; Rom. 6:12-23; Mt. 10:40-42;

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION:

Prophet

I met a Prophet yesterday.

He smokes cigars.

And washes windows for a living.

"There are only two things you need to know about God," he said

"First, there is a God"

"And the second?" I asked.

"you ain't him," he replied



The Prophet looked down at me from the window ledge.
"There's only one more thing you should know" he said.
"We are all on a river, each of us with God in our boat.
God steers, you row. You got that?"

I said I did.

Remember, you just row. God will take care of the rest.”

He paused, and added:

“Don’t forget: God Don’t Row”.

Nordarse, Guillermo. Thirty Three Days: A Poetry Journal. FL. Winter Park. Numen Press Inc. 2001. Poetry by a Cedar Falls artist.

"The worst thing that can happen to a person who is already divided up into a dozen different compartments is to seal off yet another compartment and tell him that this one is more important than all the others, and that he must henceforth exercise a special care in keeping it separate from them. That is what tends to happen when contemplation is unwisely thrust without warning upon the bewilderment and distraction of Western man. The Eastern traditions have the advantage of disposing the person more naturally for contemplation. Not only does love's weakness, with inexhaustible strength, overcome its opposite, and triumph through that opposition; the lover's own selfhood is itself affirmed and realized in its very self-negation. Selflessness is neither self-hatred nor self-destruction, but the proper way to wholeness, fulfillment, self-relatedness. I who love give myself away; but in so doing I find myself again, receiving my "self" back in a new and fuller way. 189 Now I am more truly and securely "I" than before I died to self in love; for I have learned to "be," without "having," have learned that in giving up what I have I am free simply to be, to love with truthfulness and realism without the illusions that possessions conjure up. As Scripture promises "those who lose their lives shall find them." Pg. 254. Lewis, Alan E. Between Cross and Resurrection. Grand Rapids, MI. Eerdmans. 2001.

The first thing that you have to do, before you start thinking about such a thing as contemplation, is to try to recover your basic natural unity, to reintegrate your compartmentalized being into a coordinated and simple whole, and learn to live as a unified human person. This means that you have to bring back together the fragments of your distracted existence so that when you say 'I' there is really someone present to support the pronoun you have uttered.” Thomas Merton
From *Seeds* selected and edited by Robert Inchausti (Boston, MA, Shambhala Publications, Inc, 2002, pages 84, 85).

I find it in my diary just before the words, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it." Finding and losing, therefore, losing and finding, that is the meaning of my dream. Yet what is it to find again the life you have lost? Is it to find happiness? Or is it to find something more than happiness? It is to find something more believe now, to find a peace that embraces joy and sorrow. That is not happiness pure and simple. It is conscious well-being, and you come to this consciousness by finding and losing, by losing and finding your well-being. Pg. 16. Dunne, John. The Homing Spirit. NY. Crossroad Pub. 1987.

Life in Christ, therefore, means placing all our relations, in and through which we obtain our personal identity, in the *hypostasis* of Christ. Christ is the only one that can guarantee the ontological truth, the eternal survival, of every being we regard as unique and indispensable, for he is the only one in whom death, which threatens the particular with extinction, is overcome. It is for this reason that Christ can claim absolute uniqueness for himself to the point of demanding from us that we cease, for his sake, to regard any other being (father, mother, wife, children, etc.; Mt. 10.37; Lk. 14.26) as unique and indispensable. It is not that he wants to exclude in this way anyone we love uniquely, but rather that he is the only one who can hypostasize them and give them eternal being. Without him, their uniqueness would not be ontologically true, and our *eros* for them would tragically stumble on their death, the ultimate enemy of all uniqueness (1 Cor. 15.26). Pg. 75. Zizioulas, John D. *Communion and Otherness*. NY. T & T Clark. 2006

In Jesus' world, family was the core of one's identity and future prospects. When Jesus spoke of loving father and mother, his audience heard a reference to their entire heritage as children of Abraham, their religious and social identity. So, when Jesus talked about loving parents more than loving him, he was saying, "If you so cherish what you know, what society has given you, that it gets in the way of following me, you aren't capable of being a disciple."

"There can be no doubt, no compromise, in my decision to be completely faithful to God's will and truth, and hence I must seek always and in everything to act for His will and in His truth, and thus to seek with His grace to be 'a saint.'

There must be no doubt, no compromise in my efforts to avoid falsifying this work of truth by considering too much what others approve of and regard as 'holy.' In a word, it may happen (or may not) that what God demands of me may make me look less perfect to others, and that it may rob me of their support, their affection, their respect. To become a saint therefore may mean the anguish of looking like, and in a real sense 'being,' a sinner, an outcast. It may mean apparent conflict with certain standards that maybe wrongly understood by me or by others or by all of us.

The thing is to cling to God's will and truth in their purity and try to be sincere and to act in all things out of genuine love, in so far as I can." *January 25, 1962, IV. 198*

From *A Year with Thomas Merton, Daily Meditations from His Journals*, selected and edited by Jonathan Montaldo (HarperSanFrancisco, A Division of HarperCollinsPublishers, New York, 2004), P 26.

The disciple is sent as a materially poor messenger to bring his spiritual wealth to the people who are materially richer but spiritually poorer than he. If a person "receives" the disciple as what he is-and this means "in the name of a prophet" (10:41) - he shall receive a prophet's reward.

If the disciple, his creative center wide awake, be received by an average man whose center is asleep, the latter will either be awakened and recognize the disciple as "a prophet" or he will be irked and offended by him so that the disciple has to leave and to shake the dust from his feet. If the host only recognizes and tends the physical needs, he "shall not lose his reward": physical welfare. If he understands that the guest is righteous, his own righteousness will grow. If he is sensitive enough to discover that he harbors a prophet, he will become a prophet himself; and if he is receptive to the light of the creative center, the inner light will 'be kindled in his own center too. One candle kindles the other, but the candle is only the tool. The fire does not originate in the candle; it comes from a higher world. Whoever receives the Son of man receives Him that sent him.

Kunkel, Fritz. Creation Continues. Waco, TX. Word books, Pub. 1973. Pg. 141

Specifically, Jesus reminds his Mediterranean listeners of another basic social institution in their culture intended to make up for separation from one's family, namely, hospitality. By definition, hospitality in the Middle East is extended almost exclusively by men almost exclusively to total strangers. (The care one extends to relatives is called "steadfast loving-kindness")

Hospitality provides safe passage for families (like Abraham's, Gen 12) or smaller groups (like Lot's visitors, Gen 19) through regions where they have no kinfolk. Jesus exhorts new communities of followers to practice hospitality toward each other in order to make up for the loss of family advantage. Whereas in Middle Eastern culture the reward for hospitality was largely the honor that accrued to one who extended it, Jesus connects the practice of hospitality among non-related believers to a reward that God himself will give

Pilch, John J. The Cultural World of Jesus-Cycle A. The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN. 1995. Page 104.

In my name: In a well-known exorcism papyrus in the National Library of Paris, written about AD 300, there is a list of efficacious names to be used, and "Jesu, the god of the Hebrews" is included in the list.

Wawter, Bruce, C.M. The Four Gospels. Garden City, NY. Doubleday & Co. Inc. 1967. Pg. 207.

The prophet is one who loves the community and is therefore able to point out deviations from what the community wants itself to be. This function is beyond the scope of merely human reasoning. In other words, a prophet is inspired by God to understand and articulate his or her own experience in a way that challenges the entire community. In this way, the prophet affirms the basic goals of the community and questions the means to those goals.

Fitzpatrick, Mother Gail, OCSO. Seasons of Grace: Wisdom from the Cloister. Chicago. ACTA Pub. 2000. Page 81.

The cup that we drink with Christ is here and now. In accepting the unknown, the disappointments, the dryness, the ordinariness of our life, we are with Christ – neither on his left nor his right, but with him nonetheless. Not one moment, not one experience of our life is outside of this promise. It is all part of the Lord's cup, and we will drink it.

Fitzpatrick, Mother Gail, OCSO. Seasons of Grace: Wisdom from the Cloister. Chicago. ACTA Pub. 2000. Pages 52-3.

The most critical discernment skill is being able to distinguish between the sound of integrity and the sound of its absence. M. Scott Peck

"I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of splendid torch, which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations." --George Bernard Shaw

My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God. Albert Einstein

Instead of an intellectual search, there was suddenly a very deep gut feeling that something was different...seeing that Sun...set in the background of the very deep black and velvety cosmos, seeing –rather, knowing for sure – that there was a purposefulness of flow, of energy, of tie, of space in the cosmos – that it was beyond man's rational ability to understand, that suddenly there was a nonrational way of understanding that had been beyond my precious experience....On the return trip

home, gazing through 234, 000 miles of space toward the stars and the planet from which he had come, I suddenly experience the universe as intelligent, loving, harmonious. Edgar Mitchell

The question from agnosticism is, who turned on the lights? The question from faith is, whatever for? Annie Dillard

Obsession with the past gives way to a new undefinable sense of relatedness or intimacy, an experience of ultimate assurance, and this conversion releases creativity and most importantly freedom for the limitless possibilities of God, for hope. This freedom, this posture of hope, is really prophecy, for it enables a person to reveal the vision of a different kind of future than the one we want to construct from our limited capacities. Such a person becomes a prophet when she shows the way; when she is willing to stand on the horizon so that all can see this future, God's future. Pg. 35. [CONSTANCE FITZGERALD](#)

We always and forever need the prophets or else most religion worships itself instead of God. The pattern is persistent. Richard Rohr

If one has the answers to all the questions- that is the proof that God is not with him. It means that he is a false prophet using religion for himself. The great leaders of the people of God, like Moses, have always left room for doubt. Pope Francis

Institutions always want loyalists and "company men"; we don't want prophets. We don't want people who point out our shadow side or our dark side. It is no accident that the prophets and the priests are usually in opposition to one another. Richard Rohr

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Janice Grana Ed. [Images](#). St. Mary's College Press, Winona MN 1976. **NOT FOR THE HESITANT**: Page 130.

IT WOULD BE EASIER: Page 89. **METAMORPHOSES** :Page 143.

Shea, John. **The God Who Fell From Heaven**. Argus Communications, Allen, TX. **A SONG OF DISCIPLESHIP**: 1979. Page 76.

Mitchell, Stephen. [The Enlightened Heart](#). Harper & Row, NY. 1989. **WISDOM** : Page 14