

## Toetrede

### Liturgie van die Lig

## Woorddiens

### Lesing 1: Markus 1:29-39 (1953)

<sup>29</sup> EN dadelik toe hulle uit die sinagoge uitgegaan het, kom hulle saam met Jakobus en Johannes in die huis van Simon en Andréas.

<sup>30</sup> En die skoonmoeder van Simon het siek gelê aan die koors; en dadelik het hulle Hom van haar gesê.

<sup>31</sup> Daarop gaan Hy na haar, neem haar hand en rig haar op, en dadelik het die koors haar verlaat, en sy het hulle bedien.

<sup>32</sup> En toe dit aand geword het en die son onder was, het hulle na Hom gebring almal wat ongesteld en van duiwels besete was.

<sup>33</sup> En die hele stad het by die deur saamgekom.

<sup>34</sup> En baie wat aan allerhande siektes gely het, het Hy gesond gemaak en baie duiwels uitgedryf en die duiwels nie toegelaat om te praat nie, omdat hulle Hom geken het.

<sup>35</sup> En vroeg in die môre, nog diep in die nag, het Hy opgestaan en uitgegaan en na 'n eensame plek vertrek en daar gebed.

<sup>36</sup> En Simon en die wat by hom was, het Hom gevolg.

<sup>37</sup> En toe hulle Hom vind, sê hulle vir Hom: Almal soek U.

<sup>38</sup> En Hy sê vir hulle: Laat ons na die naburige dorpe gaan, sodat Ek ook daar kan preek; want daarvoor het Ek uitgegaan.

<sup>39</sup> En Hy het die hele Galilëa deur in hulle sinagoges gepreek en die duiwels uitgedryf.

### Broodjies vir die Pad

Today's readings join the themes of vocation and power. When we are in tune with God's movements in our lives, we mediate power that transforms our lives and the world. This power does not insulate us from life's tragedies and failures, but it gives us insight and courage to respond to them. (PaF)



God is a different God depending on God's relations and the unfolding events of our lives and the world. Though God seeks wholeness everywhere, the nature of this quest is always intimate and personal. The same intimacy applied to Jesus' healing and teaching ministry, and should inspire us in our own spiritual leadership.

Mark 1: 29-39 presents a "day in the life" of Jesus. Jesus has just preached at the local synagogue. He gains notoriety that day not only for his message but his healing of a demon possessed man. He then retires with his inner circle for dinner. Jesus is still "on duty" – there is no rest for the pastor among

congregants, nor does Jesus find rest at Simon's house.

Simon's mother-in-law, the matriarch of the house, is sick with a fever and unable to fulfill her vocation as hostess and hospitality-giver. Jesus raises her up, and she responds by serving her guests. This is not a matter of sexism or women's roles, but vocation in this time and place. Our vocations are always contextual, rooted in our time and place. They are constantly evolving both personally and culturally. Healing is never solely for our personal aggrandizement, it issues in reclaiming our vocation or discovering our calling for our unique time and place. We receive God's healing touch so we can share in the healing of others. (PaF)



And this is why every Sunday in our eucharistic liturgy the congregation confesses with confidence, rather than with fear or shame, "we break this bread for our own brokenness." Rightly understood, our confession of brokenness of body and soul is a celebration rather than a lamentation, for in it the spiritual and physical frailty of humanity meet the compassion of God. (JwJ)



I used to think of the desert monastics as Christian super-heroes. I couldn't have been more wrong. And given that these oddball saints are so far removed from our own time, place, and culture, I kept wondering what drew me to them other than historical curiosity. A few thousand pages later I realized that I loved them for what John Chryssavgis calls their "spirituality of imperfection." They helped me to make peace with my own physical infirmities and spiritual imperfections.

The early ascetics fled to the solitude of the desert to seek what John Cassian (360–430) called "integrity of heart" or "integral wholeness." Seeking personal transformation and not mere theological information, they favored the voice of experience over theoretical claims, and human healing over book learning. But the conclusions of their spiritual experiment are not what you might expect.

With remarkable candor, brutal realism, unqualified empathy, and wry humor, they describe how in the vast nothingness of the Egyptian desert they discovered a cacophony of voices in the interior geography of the human heart. They sought wholeness but discovered brokenness. And they embraced their brokenness, says Cassian, "without any obfuscating embarrassment," and without ever "despising anyone in belittling fashion."

Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences* read like a modern therapist's clinical observations. He gives detailed descriptions of lethargy, sleeplessness, unsettling dreams, impulsive urges, self-justification, seething emotions, sexual fantasies, pious pretense that masked as virtue, self-deception, clerical ambition and the desire to dominate, crushing

despair, confusion, wild mood swings, flattery, and the dreaded "noonday demon" of *acedia* ("a wearied or anxious heart" that suggests close parallels to clinical depression).

And that's not the worst part. Cassian also admits that "there are many things that lie hidden in my conscience which are known and manifest to God, even though they may be unknown and obscure to me." Similarly, his friend Germanus observes how "superfluous thoughts insinuate themselves into us so subtly and hiddenly when we do not even want them, and indeed do not even know of them, that it is very difficult not only to cast them out but even to understand them and to catch hold of them."

Despite their ruthless realism about our faults and failures, the desert monks didn't live like helpless or hopeless victims. Rather, they exuded confidence in God's unconditional love. They showed tenderness and patience toward one another and to their own selves. They avoided the faintest hint of judgementalism, rejected every manifestation of extremist zeal, and chose not to compare themselves with others or even to be overly anxious about their progress. "We are," concluded Cassian, not angels but "only human beings." (JwJ)

## Brood vir die Pad

### Ek wil nou nie skinder, maar het jy gehoor ...

deur Wilhelm Jordaan

Die wêreldkulture het baie spreekwoorde oor die mens se nuk om te skinder.

Soos: As die Nyl jou geheim ken, sal dit gou in die woestyn bekend word; gee 'n skinderstorie 'n voorree van 24 uur en jy haal dit nooit in nie; om te sê "hulle sê" is so te sê 'n leuen.

Sulke spreekwoorde is 'n soort volksielkunde wat ons waarsku teen die skinderkring.

En tog doen ons dit met slu sinnetjies wat begin met: "Ek wil nou nie skinder nie, maar het julle gehoor van ..."

Die spreker pols as't ware sy gehoor se skinderlus en trek dan gewoonlik los en voltooi die onvoltooide sinnetjie. Want mense sê selde: "Nee, ek wil die storie nie hoor nie!"

En jy luister met gretige ore hoe die spreker se gretige tong soos 'n ratse klein koggelmander tussen die lippe baljaar om die sappige storie op te dis. Ons giggel graag agterhands en agterbaks oor 'n tweedehandse storie.

Tog is daar mense wat reken skinder het groot waarde. Eerstens is skinder 'n manier om mense se morele kodes te herbevestig.

As vroue byvoorbeeld skinder oor 'n "vatterige baas" op kantoor, word 'n belangrike kode oor seksuele teistering in die werkplek beaam.

Tweedens help skinder mense om vergelykings te tref oor hoe goed of sleg hulle daaraan toe is wat belangrike lewensdinge betref.

Word daar byvoorbeeld geskinder oor hoe swak 'n werkgewer sy personeel behandel, bied dit 'n norm waaraan mense ander werkgewers se gedrag kan meet.

Derdens is skinder 'n soort "sement" vir groepsolidariteit. In die trant van: "Ons praat maar net so 'n bietjie tussen ons om ons menings oor mnr. of me. X te toets.

Dit help mos om saam te dink."

Om dan nie saam te skinder nie, kan beteken jy word algaande uit die groep geskuif, want iemand wat weier om saam te praat, is nie te vertrou nie.

Baie mense vrees dié uitsluiting en skinder juis daarom met oorgawe saam.

Al is dit so dat skinder in ons aard is en waarde het, is dit sekerlik ook in ons aard om te vra of die waarde van skinder werklik opweeg teen die skade wat dit die beskinderde mens kan berokken – juis wanneer die storie halfwaar of onwaar is en gedra word deur die vae, onbetroubare "hulle sê" en die uitkringende uitwerking van "hoorsê."

Skinder verhinder dat mense mekaar werklik begryp en bewus word van die omstandighede waarin 'n bepaalde storie ontstaan het en of dit werklik waar is soos dit vertel word.

In skinderkringe is daar min genade.

En dit tas jou wat skinder en die beskinderde mens se menslikheid aan op 'n manier wat die Engelse digter William Blake (my vertaling) só verwoord het:

Meer as al die leuens wat jy kan fabriseer  
sal die waarheid met 'n engel  
jou broer se klein verweer  
tot op die bodem skeur.

## Wegsending

Liefdegawes

Mededelings

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