

**Reflection for Jan. 22, 2021**  
**Mark 3: 13-19 Heb. 8: 6-13**  
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It's only the first month of the new year and we've lived through what we could have hardly imagined. Many of us are still reeling from the events at the Capitol two weeks ago from the violence and hatred of white supremacy. Monday, we remembered the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and our country's structural and personal racism.

Wednesday, in the midst of threats of violence and intimidation, we inaugurated Joseph Biden and Kamala Harris as President and Vice President for our nation. Thankfully, all went well. Today we are praying for legal protection of the unborn. All of this taking place in a Church and country deeply divided with no clear path to healing and resolution.

It's no wonder that we may feel teary, vulnerable, afraid, exhausted in mind, heart and body and finding it difficult to believe in or hang onto hope. Where is God's plan for peace, not disaster, and a future full of hope?

The readings may provide a reason to hope, for the Word is about God's desire to be in relationship with us and all creation. In the first reading from Hebrews, God enters into a covenant relationship with Israel in which the people were to obey God's will and God in turn would be their protector. God's law would be planted in their hearts.

In Jesus, we see ever more clearly how personal is the relationship between God and humanity. In Jesus, God wants to walk with us and be part of our lives. So Jesus called by name those whom he wanted to be with him, to stay with him, walk with and learn from him what God's heart is like and what is God's desire for the world. After that formation they were to go out into the world to bring and to be good news. They were to do in the world what Jesus was doing in the world ... healing, reconciling, feeding, bringing life, light and wholeness to all they encountered. They were empowered to cast out demons. They were called for mission.

In baptism, each of us was called by name to a personal, intimate relationship with God. Like the apostles, we have been called to identify our lives with the mind and heart of God revealed in Jesus who empowers us to bring good news.

**The good news we need to bring is that all of life is sacred, valuable, unique, diverse, evolving, connected and is to be respected, supported and nurtured all along the way.**

All created reality reflects something of the image of God and we are sisters and brothers to one another and all of creation. We only have so much energy and can't do everything, but we must be on the side of life and love for that is who God is and we are God's image to the world.

We support life today and image God by:

- + praying and working for the unborn and for their legal protection;
- + seeking to eradicate the death penalty, white privilege and racism;
- + advocating the release of children from cages and uniting families;
- + freeing those unjustly incarcerated,;
- + protecting the ozone, the rainforests and thousands of species from destruction and extinction; and
- + loving those we perceive as our enemies. The list goes on....

We do not have a one-issue God, but One who is concerned about and loves all creation, and so must we.

Like the apostles in today's Gospel, we have been called by name for mission and our lives are an ongoing discovery of what that means. As Ilia Delio reminds us, "we are a mystery to ourselves and God is a mystery to us. Engage the mystery by living into it. We create the universe by our thinking-acting lives ... Let us think as the universe and let us love as God." (Ilia Delio: "How Shall we enter into 2021?")