

Paula Cooney, Reflection

July 24, 2024

Jer 1:1;4-10 / Mt 13:1-9

Over the past few weeks I have been struck by two themes that are woven into the gospels that are presented to us for reflection: Parables – and being called to Prophetic ministry.

Nothing new – but, for whatever reason – I found myself pondering them and the invitation they offer.

Being taught in parables – at another place in Mark's gospel we heard a few weeks ago, the writer finds Jesus pondering: how can I help them understand what I am trying to tell them? He was quite aware that some of the soil of people's hearts would be hard and thorny and not rich and receptive. I imagine him considering those things that they already knew – about seeds – and mustard plants – and the impact of storms – and what happens when you don't build on solid ground – and he built his stories on their experience.

Maybe it's not a lost coin, but a misplaced cell phone. I have an app on my i-pad that lets me find it

Or maybe not a mustard seed and a mustard plant, but maybe zinnia seeds that are now spread from Sr. Anne Wisda's garden all around Monroe reminding people of God's beauty and care for all.

And it might not be a lost sheep, but it might be a mother duck who, in moving her brood along, loses two ducklings who fall off the ledge and who, while keeping an eye on the rest, waits until she sees them and guides them back.

And, as we seek to be the diverse, inclusive community where all are welcome, the deepening realization that science has confirmed and Jesus said to us over and over that we are connected, to every person as daughters and sons of God where do we find the images in OUR experience that it is so.

So, I wonder – as Jesus sees through our eyes – hears with our ears - walks with us on this earth at this time, what would be the parables – the stories – based on OUR experience that he would tell us something that would help us understand his message today.

So, the second theme –the call to act from a prophetic stance.

The reading from Jeremiah offers us both blessing and challenge – the blessing of knowing that each of us is **known** by God from before we were born...accompanied on the journey that is ours to live even when we feel like we're too young or too old or too anything.

We are no less in need of courageous women and men today for whom non – violence is a way of life / who reach out and embrace those who are put at the margin of society because of the color of their skin or their gender or sexual orientation / who stand at the border with those seeking life for themselves and their family / who see the earth as their mother – as their home and make choices to live in that relationship.

As individuals and as a community – we have been, are, and will continue to be, as our Chapter Direction tells us:

Committed to being and becoming Christ's liberating mission... especially in spaces longing for liberation.

And called "(to) dare – to risk – to dream (the) the unfolding of the kingdom of God."

It seems to me that **is** the prophetic stance we are being called to take.

Prophetic stance –and parables – how will they weave themselves into our story? I don't know – but it will be an adventure to find out.