

Scripture for April 27, 2008
6th Sunday of Easter

Reflection from John Surette, SJ

Hope based on Promises

Listen to the promise made in the final verse of this morning's Gospel reading: "And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them." Listen to it again. It is a promise. "And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

Our hopes are often based on a promise that has been made. What is distinctive of us Christians is our hope in the promise of Easter, of resurrection, of transformation... not just at the end of time but throughout all of time including this present moment.

Consider the number of times in this chapel I have mentioned that God's Universe is some 14 billion years old, an almost imaginable length of time, and that we in this 21st century are integral members of that Universe. Such a long period of time carries the promise of God's commitment to and investment in the Universe. It carries the promise of God being profoundly faithful over deep time and therefore faithful in our present time....and so we can have hope.



Consider the promise made to Abraham and Sarah that they would have descendents as numerous as the grains of sand of the seashore. Because of that promise, in their old age they left behind all that was familiar and set out with hope in their hearts for a new and unfamiliar land.

The Well

*A Center for our
Sacred Unity with God,
Earth, and One
Another.*

1515 W. Ogden Ave.
LaGrange Park, IL 60526
www.csjthewell.org
thewell@csjlagrange.org

*A Center for our
Sacred Unity with
God,
Earth, and One
Another.*

1515 W. Ogden Ave.

LaGrange Park, IL 60526

www.csjthewell.org

thewell@csjlagrange.org

Consider the promise made to the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey. Because of that promise, with a hope to offset their anxieties and fears, they set out on some forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

Consider each moment of dawn as Earth turns toward its Sun. The turning carries the promise of the continuation of life and the newness of life. With such a promise we are able to enter into the new day with hope in that newness.

Consider each moment of dusk as Earth turns away from its Sun. The turning carries the promise that the darkness of night is not the final word. Because of that promise we can close our eyes in sleep hoping to awake to a new day in the morning.

Consider each time that a seed is planted. The very act of planting carries the promise that as a result of going down into the soil the seed will grow into the total surprise that is a new plant. So the seed is placed into the ground with the hope that it will yield ten, twenty, or even a hundredfold.

Consider each time that we pray for peace or work for justice in our world. The very act of praying or working carries the promise that the overwhelming brutality of what is happening within the human community need not be the final state of affairs. And so with hope we can continue with our praying and our working.

Consider all the ways in which we humans are diminishing and destroying planet Earth. We are tempted to despair over the situation and wonder if anything can be done to reverse what is happening. Instead, we find the courage to hope for and imagine a better relationship between Earth and its human community. Our imagining of this better relationship carries the promise of a new way forward.

Finally, consider the times when we have taken the risk of reaching out in love to another. This risk contains the promise of communion, of relatedness, and of bonding... all experiences that carry the hope of a more abundant, a more meaningful, a more significant, and a more fully human life for all of us.

Our hopes carry the promises of a better future, a future that is making its presence felt in this present moment.

Let us take all the promises seriously!

The Well

*A Center for our
Sacred Unity with
God,
Earth, and One
Another.*

1515 W. Ogden Ave.
LaGrange Park, IL 60526
www.csjthewell.org
thewell@csjlagrange.org