

May 3, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

NECESSARY REMINDERS

By Elisabeth Beall

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

*"I am reminding you, brothers and sisters,
of the Gospel I preached to you,
which you indeed received and in which you also stand."*

CORINTHIANS 15:1

Reflection

Paul is credited with writing this letter to the Corinthians more than two millennia ago, but the message – and the way he expresses it – are all too contemporary.

The first line of today's first reading sums it up: "I am reminding you, brothers and sisters." To me, this line reads as though Paul is trying to hold back his exasperation. He has shared the Good News with these people before; it is easy to imagine that he shared with them his own experience with Jesus on the road

to Damascus.

But it's also easy to understand why he might need to reiterate these things again and again. After all, Paul had a firsthand, physical encounter with the risen Christ. He was struck blind and then his vision was restored. Like Thomas, he had physical proof that Jesus had risen from the dead, that he was the Son of God, the Messiah who had been so long awaited.

On the other hand, the Corinthians had to believe in the risen Christ without physical proof – just as we do. Paul heard Jesus – with his physical ears – call him by name, and command him where to go and what to do. Like us, the Corinthians had to discern God's call within their hearts.

It's not easy.

There is no shame in needing to be reminded (and Paul does not scold the Corinthians for needing a reminder, even if he may feel some frustration). After all, reminders are built into our very church communities, and into the structure of the Mass. There is no shame in struggling to sustain and to nurture our faith; it can grow even stronger in the course of such struggles.

And it's not only St. Paul who understands these difficulties; Jesus himself knew that believing the Good News would be difficult for many. As he said to Doubting Thomas: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).



A person holding lit candles in front of a black table

Photo by Stephen Noulton

For Pondering

- When did you struggle with your faith? What were the circumstances, and how did you resolve the struggle?
- How does your church community reassure you and remind you of God's great love for us all?
- What provides you with the strongest reminders of the Good News -- the strongest boosts to your faith?

For Prayer

*God of all,
I am filled with thanksgiving for your gracious generosity,
for the gift of your Son and the gift of salvation.
I give thanks for your great understanding
when I struggle with my faith.
I know that you are at my side in my doubt and in my certainty.
Help me to cherish and nurture my faith
and grow closer to you in everything I do.
Amen.*

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