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Daily Reflections



SACRED SPIRITUAL MOMENTS

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's First Reading

When hunger came to be felt throughout the land of Egypt and the people cried to Pharaoh for bread, Pharaoh directed all the Egyptians to go to Joseph and do whatever he told them. When the famine had spread throughout the land, Joseph opened all the cities that had grain and rationed it to the Egyptians, since the famine had gripped the land of Egypt. In fact, all the world came to Joseph to obtain rations of grain, for famine had gripped the whole world. The sons of Israel were among those who came to procure rations.

It was Joseph, as governor of the country, who dispensed the rations to all the people. When Joseph's brothers came and knelt down before him with their faces to the ground, he recognized them as soon as he saw them. But Joseph concealed his own identity from them and spoke sternly to them. With that, he locked them up in the guardhouse for three days.

On the third day Joseph said to his brothers: "Do this, and you shall live; for I am a God-fearing man. If you have been honest, only one of your brothers need be confined in this prison, while the rest of you may go and take home provisions for your starving families. But you must come back to me with your youngest brother. Your words will thus be verified, and you will not die." To this they agreed. To one another, however, they said: "Alas, we are being punished because of our brother. We saw the anguish of his heart when he pleaded with us, yet we paid no heed; that is why this anguish has now come upon us." Reuben broke in, "Did I not tell you not to do wrong to the boy? But you would not listen! Now comes the reckoning for his blood." The brothers did not know, of course, that Joseph understood what they said, since he spoke with them through an interpreter. But turning away from them, he wept.

GENESIS 41:55-57; 42:5-7a; 17-24a

Reflection

This story from Genesis is emotionally moving and spiritually powerful. While Joseph recognizes his brothers, they do not recognize him. The betrayal Joseph must have felt could have overwhelmed him with vengeance – but it didn't. Instead, Joseph tests his brothers to see if they show any signs of repentance and remorse for handing him over into slavery.

As the brothers talk among themselves, they own up to their sinful actions and something deep within their consciousness is triggered. This story of forgiveness, restoration, and family reconciliation is one we can each take to heart. This story is a sacred, spiritual moment where healing takes root among these brothers. Their hearts are open and are moved to reconciliation. How often do we miss opportunities to reconcile and seek forgiveness for our wrongdoing? Our behaviors? Our betrayals?

RECONCILIATION



Image created by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- Reflect on your own life. Is there anyone with whom you need to reconcile?
- Perhaps you are being called to be a mediator in the dispute between friends, coworkers, or family members. Will you respond? How?
- Pray for the grace of forgiveness and reconciliation in your life.

For Prayer

*Compassionate God,
help us to be people of reconciliation.
Let us not seek revenge and hold grudges against those who have harmed us.
May we seek a path of restorative justice, hope, and peace
as we traverse this world together.
Amen.*

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