

July 5, 2025

Daily Reflections



WHEN WE MAKE A DETOUR

By Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

“Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau, your first-born. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.” Isaac asked his son, “How did you find it so quickly, my son?” “The Lord your God gave me success,” he replied. Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not.” Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he proceeded to bless him. “Are you really my son Esau?” he asked. “I am,” he replied. Then he said, “My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing.” Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come here, my son, and kiss me.” So, he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him”

Reflection

Reading the story of Jacob, the full text of Genesis 27:1-5, 15-29, and even the chapters/verses before and after, there was a nagging question in my mind. Why did God choose Jacob when he deceived Isaac, his father, for his birthright and Isaac's blessing? My human and rigid mind says Jacob is not worthy; God should have chosen better.

That is not how God's mind works, though. God's mind is more expansive and even unfathomable to us. God's way is not our way. Observing from the scriptures and even in my life and the lives of my spiritual directees, God pushes the peripheries for us to expand our horizons. God never fails to stump or baffle us, surprise us, put us in awe, or overwhelm us.

Just like this reading -- as I said, I had that nagging question. My being a #1 in the Enneagram tells me oh, Jacob was not worthy. However, the nagging continued. I have experienced a lot in my life (having cared for my parents for 23 years and having gone through my formation years and the Art of Spiritual Direction classes). I have discovered that when something nags me or something stirs in me, it is best if I take a loving look at it. I need to do a deeper dive. It is just as though God is telling me: Pay attention, there is something to be learned here.

Looking back at the chapters/verses before Genesis 27, I learned that when God gave their sons to Isaac and Rebekah, she experienced a difficult pregnancy; the twins seemed to struggle within her womb. God revealed that the twins would become two nations, with the elder serving the younger. The prophecy also indicated a rivalry between the brothers. God's plan was there from the moment they were conceived. Jacob was chosen to be the stronger brother and from that lineage came Jesus, the Son of God. Looking at the chapters after Genesis 27, the story continues to show the transformation of Jacob and the story of the reconciliation of Esau and Jacob.

It just confirms what I heard in one of my classes when I started my formation with the congregation five years ago. The speaker said (I paraphrase): "When we take a detour, God labors to put us back on the right path." Jacob took a detour by deceiving Isaac. That was not an admirable thing. God labored to put him back on the right track, though. Jacob experienced difficulties with Laban, his father-in-law, and his own family ... God's justice at work. Jacob ultimately learned to trust God and was transformed. He became Israel. He was back on track. It took years, it took maturing, to eventually achieve God's purpose. This

does not justify Jacob's deception -- NO. Jacob's deception was a mistake. The story just shows the redemptive work of God; God always works for righteousness to prevail. God works to align us with the divine plan. God can use the worst of us, flawed or broken individuals that we are, and bring about the good. God can forge a path for us even in the places where there seems no way at all.



Image created by Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

For Pondering

- I encourage you to read Genesis 25 – 50. You do not have to do it in one sitting. Take time and observe how God stirred Jacob's path.
- How did God transform Jacob? How did God put him back on the right track?

- Recall an instance in your life where your path went askew and you saw the hand of God putting things back in the right places. In recalling this, what stirs in you? What moves you? Write it down. What nugget of wisdom did you get from the experience?
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For Prayer

*Source of life,
I stumble and fall.
I insist on my ways sometimes,
And stray from the path you set for me.
Guide me, illumine my way,
Help me to align my will with yours
And follow your lead.
Amen.*

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