



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH LENT

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DO I STAND WITH JESUS?

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him,
"If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples,
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

JOHN 8:31-32

Reflection

Out of context, the quote above from John seems marvelous. It is positive and promises life lived in freedom. However, it is part of a long text where the Pharisees and Jesus are in a tug-of-war about the truth of their faith stance as one of slavery or freedom.

There is a concerted effort to kill Jesus because his teaching and manner of being among the people seems so contrary to the tradition the Pharisees strive to uphold. Jesus seems to break the laws that govern faithful behavior. They see themselves as protecting the covenant through abiding by the many laws that guided life. Jesus challenges their adherence to the law without a living encounter with God. Acting on tradition seems more important than a dynamic relationship with God who is love. He seeks to set them free from sin, while they only see

themselves as descendants of Abraham striving to be free from sin by adhering to numerous laws and traditions.

This causes me pause to wonder about myself:

- Where am I blind to my own sinfulness of deed or omission?
- Is my effort to follow my own Catholic Christian tradition hindering fidelity to the Spirit and way of Jesus?
- Am I simply blindly following precepts and failing to comprehend the essence of my faith which is relationship with Jesus?

A life-giving relationship requires that I ponder the teachings and actions of Jesus so to be a loving, compassionate, and engaged presence among God's people as Jesus was. It is not about following rules, laws, and rituals, as beautiful as these may be. Rather, I must ponder with Jesus:

- Does my relationship with Jesus help me become my best self, and more like Jesus in my attitudes, inner disposition, and in my behavior?
- Is my relationship alive, faithful in spirit, and tangible?
- Is living in the manner of Jesus helping me to live in self-emptying love and compassion?

Truly being one in relationship impels me to bend low, serve, and wash feet.



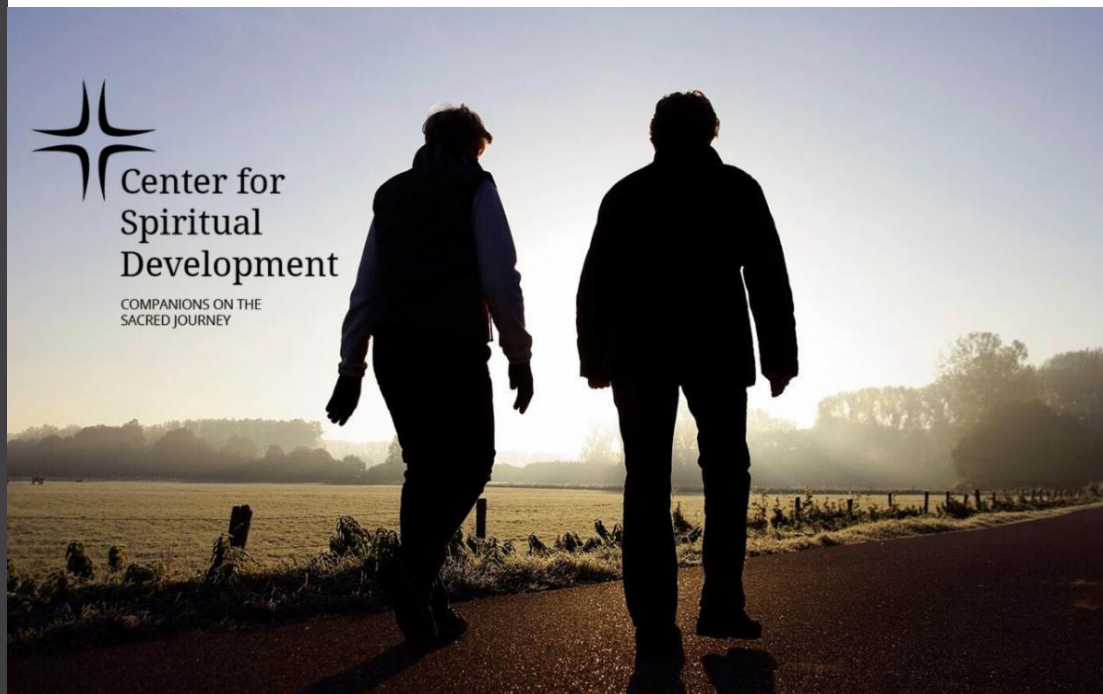
For Pondering & Prayer

Using the questions above, I reflect on my relationship with Jesus who is the reflection of God.

Jesus, may all that is you flow through me. Show me the way to love and to give of myself to you and to the people of God. Help me to be a witness of God's great love as you were. In and through relationship with you all is possible. I give you back the life I have been blessed to receive and the graces to tend. Amen

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