



Daily Reflections

WHERE GOD ABIDES

By Sr. Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's First Reading

The elders of Israel and all the leaders of the tribes, the princes in the ancestral houses of the children of Israel, came to King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from the City of David, which is Zion. All the people of Israel assembled before King Solomon during the festival in the month of Ethanim (the seventh month). When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark; they carried the ark of the LORD and the meeting tent with all the sacred vessels that were in the tent. (The priests and Levites carried them.)

King Solomon and the entire community of Israel present for the occasion sacrificed before the ark sheep and oxen too many to number or count. The priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place beneath the wings of the cherubim in the sanctuary, the holy of holies of the temple. The cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the ark, sheltering the ark and its poles from above. There was nothing in the ark but the two stone tablets which Moses had put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant

with the children of Israel at their departure from the land of Egypt.

When the priests left the holy place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD so that the priests could no longer minister because of the cloud, since the LORD's glory had filled the temple of the LORD. Then Solomon said, "The LORD intends to dwell in the dark cloud; I have truly built you a princely house, a dwelling where you may abide forever."

1 KINGS 8:1-7,9-13

Reflection

After the Temple is built and furnished in Jerusalem, it has to be dedicated, formally recognized as God's dwelling place. When the LORD's glory (i.e. God's presence) fills the Temple in the symbol of a cloud, Solomon proclaims this dwelling to be the place where the LORD God abides *forever* in the midst of the people. Abiding/dwelling with is the heart of God's relationship with the community. There is no distance between Creator and creature. The preposition "with" describes their reality.

Today's Gospel

After making the crossing to the other side of the sea, Jesus and his disciples came to land at Gennesaret and tied up there. As they were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him. They scurried about the surrounding country and began to bring in the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. Whatever villages or towns or countryside he entered, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak; and as many as touched it were healed.

MARK 6:53-56

Reflection

Chapter 6 of this gospel opens with the scene of Jesus in his hometown of Nazareth. The people there only recognize him as the "artisan/carpenter, son of Mary." After crossing to the other side of the Sea of Galilee and disembarking, things are different. Mark concludes the chapter with the phrase "people immediately recognized him. . . . and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was." Here, again, is a recognition of the Holy among the people rather than distant. This "being with" results in healing, in transitioning to wholeness. The Holy abiding has consequences for life.



Religious Wall Art Inside Building
Photo by Emre Can Acer

For Pondering

- Where do you experience the abiding presence of God? What is your response? How do you invite the rest of creation to share in that presence?

- Name a “Temple” in your life, a place where God abides with you. Make it a point to visit that place today and simply recognize God is with you especially there.
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For Prayer

What it means for us to abide with God.

*O dear God
be with me,
and help me
strive to come close –
to be fully committed
to You.
Let every part of me
-- physical, emotional and spiritual –
join
in focused determination
to fulfill Your Will.
May my thoughts,
my emotions,
my words,
and all my actions
be wholly in tune
with You.*

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