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Daily Reflections



A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION AND LOVE

By Lucy Dominguez

Today's First Reading

Paul addressed the people in these words:

*"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia,
but brought up in this city.*

*At the feet of Gamaliel I was educated strictly in our ancestral law
and was zealous for God, just as all of you are today.*

*I persecuted this Way to death,
binding both men and women and delivering them to prison.*

*Even the high priest and the whole council of elders
can testify on my behalf.*

*For from them I even received letters to the brothers
and set out for Damascus to bring back to Jerusalem
in chains for punishment those there as well.*

*On that journey as I drew near to Damascus,
about noon a great light from the sky suddenly shone around me.*

*I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me,
'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'*

I replied, 'Who are you, sir?'
And he said to me,
'I am Jesus the Nazorean whom you are persecuting.'
My companions saw the light
but did not hear the voice of the one who spoke to me.
I asked, 'What shall I do, sir?'
The Lord answered me, 'Get up and go into Damascus,
and there you will be told about everything
appointed for you to do.'
Since I could see nothing because of the brightness of that light,
I was led by hand by my companions and entered Damascus.
A certain Ananias, a devout observer of the law,
and highly spoken of by all the Jews who lived there,
came to me and stood there and said,
'Saul, my brother, regain your sight.'
And at that very moment I regained my sight and saw him.
Then he said,
'The God of our ancestors designated you to know his will,
to see the Righteous One, and to hear the sound of his voice;
for you will be his witness before all
to what you have seen and heard.
Now, why delay?
Get up and have yourself baptized and your sins washed away,
calling upon his name.'"

ACTS 22:3-16

Reflection

Paul's story of transformation on the road to Damascus is a powerful reminder of how God meets us in the depths of our pain, confusion, or even rebellion. Once a zealous persecutor of Christians, Paul encountered the living Christ in a way that forever changed his life. A great light blinded him, brought him low, and led him by the hand to Damascus. It was in his vulnerability, through the compassion of Ananias, that Paul regained his physical and spiritual sight.

Paul's conversion speaks to how God can work through others to reach us, even when we feel far from Him. When I was in my twenties, I faced a darkness that swallowed me whole, a depression so deep that even the smallest acts of care, like bathing or eating, felt impossible. I begged God to take the darkness away, but He seemed absent. In my despair, I decided that God didn't exist. I abandoned my faith, convinced that I was alone.

Months later, as I sat quietly on my sofa, God brought me back to that painful time. I remembered my sister, who visited me daily, ensuring I ate and caressing me until I could sleep. In that memory, I realized God had been with me all along, present in my sister's love, tenderness, and presence. In that realization, I was overcome by a profound love that filled every part of me. It wasn't shame I felt, but gratitude and transformation. From that moment, I have never doubted God's presence.

Paul's story reveals a profound truth: God often works through others to reach us. Sometimes, we can't recognize His presence in the darkness, but He is there in the hands that comfort us, the voices that encourage us, and the love that sustains us. Paul's transformation led him to become a witness to God's love.

May we always remember that God's presence is constant, even when it feels hidden. He is in the people who walk with us, just as Ananias walked with Paul and my sister walked with me. Through these encounters, God's love transforms not only our hearts but the hearts of those we, in turn, are called to serve.



Black and White Street Scene with Umbrellas

Photo by Alexis B

For Pondering

- In moments of darkness or struggle, have you ever experienced God's presence through the actions or love of another person? How did that encounter shape your understanding of God?
 - Paul's transformation began with vulnerability and surrender. Are there areas in your life where you resist letting go and allowing God to work through others to guide or support you?
 - How can you be a vessel of God's love for someone experiencing darkness or doubt? What small actions can you take to bring light into their life?
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For Prayer

Mentor of my life, you invite me to follow you. You give me the courage to do so. It is risky to go in your Way. Please help me trust in you, especially when I feel a lack of security or face the challenge of standing up for your truth.

Merciful One, there have been times when I have made choices and decisions that were not in keeping with the message and values of your son, Jesus. Forgive me for the distance that I place between you and myself. Keep calling me home to you when I get lost on the road to your love.

Faithful God, your forgiveness and your love are powerful reminders of who you are. As I experience your goodness through the sacraments, people, nature, and events of my days, draw me ever nearer to your heart. Deepen in me a desire to share this love with others.

God of light, open me to the many ways you are present in my life. Light my Way. Guide me. Gift me with an inner eye of faith so that all of life takes on the quality of your loving presence.

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