



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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A DIVIDED KINGDOM

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

*"If a kingdom is divided against itself,
that kingdom cannot stand."*

MARK 3:24

Reflection

A divided kingdom! Now this is something I have experienced more often than I would like, and it seems to speak directly to the realities in our society. A conflicted kingdom, whether that be a nation, a work group, a church, a community, or one's inner self makes for a stressful and worrisome reality.

On a personal level, once one has a well-honed conscience, inner conflict is indicative of something disturbed within. Discernment is surely needed. To live in constant division or alienation is a painful and deadly experience. There is strength in firmly held values and a well-developed faith stance that inform a life. I can claim to be a person of God within my faith tradition. Failure to integrate the teaching, principles, and expressed values of my life results in inner conflict and internal division.

Fidelity to God's abiding presence in the here-and-now requires that, as a Christian, we take to heart the teaching and ways of Jesus, or the ways of covenant relationship. We cannot say we are believers and followers unless we consciously examine our lives in word, deed, and belief and align ourselves with the life of God within us. Usually, our strain is due to inner struggle between life-giving values and our ego determination.

God in Jesus invites us to engage, and to participate in, the Kingdom of God, at home within ourselves. Being hearers and bearers of the Word that is God among us, requires more of us than business as usual, or simply drifting through life. Full participation in the kingdom requires conversion in all aspects of our lives.

Speaking of living by Gospel values, Dorothy Day said, *"The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart. A revolution which must start with each one of us."* This is a truth and an encouragement from Dorothy Day that requires my attention.

I do not like the inner conflict within myself when I sense that I am on the wrong path, or choosing a strategy, or making a decision that is diametrically opposed to the way of Jesus, and the principles I strive to live by. An inner alarm sounds within my soul and beckons me to think again, to choose life, not convenience or self-centered control and accumulation of power. The discomfort remains until I courageously speak up and/or choose a different course of action, "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." Nor is there true peace and well-being when I am conflicted.



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- When have I experienced dis-ease or inner conflict?
- What was the signal that alerted me?
- What grace, blessing, or sense of God's abiding do I need to find life-giving peace?

Closing Prayer

God of Life and integrity, I come to you in prayer, I am in need of your guidance and healing grace. Please shed your light and blessed wisdom upon my weary and divided spirit. I seek your abiding presence to help me discern what is amiss within me. Please lead and guide my reflection, and so to choose well my every action, choice, and word. You are my rock, my safety, my guiding light. Amen

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