



DISCERNING LEADERSHIP

MINISTRY FOR SERVICE AND RESPONSIBILITY

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE OF HOPE & PEACE



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Proposed Readings for Prayer and Meditation

ACTS 9: 1-19

Now Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, that, if he should find any men or women who belonged to the Way,* he might bring them back to Jerusalem in chains.

On his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"^d He said, "Who are you, sir?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do."

The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, for they heard the voice but could see no one. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing;^{*} so they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus. For three days he was unable to see, and he neither ate nor drank.

There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias, and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight and ask at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is there praying, and [in a vision] he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay [his] hands on him, that he may regain his sight." But Ananias replied, "Lord, I have heard from many sources about this man, what evil things he has done to your holy ones* in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to imprison all who call upon your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for this man is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites, and I will show him what he will have to suffer for my name." So Ananias went and entered the house; laying his hands on him, he said, "Saul, my brother, the Lord has sent me, Jesus who appeared to you on the way by which you came, that you may regain your sight and be filled with the holy Spirit." Immediately things like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. He got up and was baptized, and when he had eaten, he recovered his strength.*

SPES NON CONFUNDIT, 8

The first sign of hope should be the desire for peace in our world, which once more finds itself immersed in the tragedy of war. Heedless of the horrors of the past, humanity is confronting yet another ordeal, as many peoples are prey to brutality and violence. What does the future hold for those peoples, who have already endured so much? (...) May the Jubilee remind us that those who are peacemakers will be called "children of God" (Mt 5:9). The need for peace challenges us all, and demands that concrete steps be taken.

ROMANS 8: 18-19, 29

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God"

"We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."

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"Dear friends, the history of Peter and Paul shows us that the communion to which the Lord calls us is a unison of voices and personalities that does not eliminate anyone's freedom. Our patron saints followed different paths, had different ideas and at times argued with one another with evangelical frankness. Yet this did not prevent them from living the concordia apostolorum, that is, a living communion in the Spirit, a fruitful harmony in diversity.

"Let us make an effort, then, to turn our differences into a workshop of unity and communion, of fraternity and reconciliation, so that everyone in the Church, each with his or her personal history, may learn to walk side by side."

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Themes and Questions for Prayer and Meditation

1. What arises in me as I pray with the above readings? I spend time meditating on particular words that touched my heart. What resonances do they carry for my life today?
2. I take some time to reflect on Saul's journey from persecutor to apostle, from one willing to sanction violence, to one willing to suffer in the service of the ministry entrusted to him.
 - a. I use my imagination and contemplate the encounter between Paul and Jesus. I stay with Jesus' gaze on Paul. What do God's words evoke in me? "This man is a chosen instrument of mine." How am I also an instrument, chosen by God in my own humble way?
 - b. I may reflect on the shift that happened in Ananias' heart ("Saul, my brother").
3. God discerned the potential of the Apostle Paul in Saul the Pharisee, the Rock in Peter who denied Him...What about me? How might God be calling me today to become a disciple of hope, reconciliation, and peace in the context where I live?
4. What particular situations, realities and relationships long for healing, peace and reconciliation in my own context? I take the time to name these conflicts/wounds and entrust them to God's mercy. I also consider what fragmentation, brokenness, or inner tension within myself may need further healing and integration in order for me to be more effective as a peace builder.
5. What has our exchange around Peace and Conflict today helped me see anew? How might the experience have inspired/challenged me? What insights or light do I take back home with me?
6. In light of this prayerful reflection and as I prepare myself to enter the Jubilee Holy Door:
 - a. What change/conversion of heart do I feel called to embody in my own context, to give witness to the hope and reconciliation Christ offers to the world?
 - b. What am I called to release (*fears, prejudices, grudges...*) or open myself to receiving (*courage, light, truth-speaking...*) so that I become a more hopeful, courageous, and reconciling presence?
 - c. What is one commitment that I am prepared to make in response to God's call? I set an intention to carry in my heart as I prepare myself to enter the Jubilee Holy Door.