

Of Shepherds and Kings:

God's Bias for the Poor and the Humble of Heart

Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast *before God*.

(New American Bible, 1Cor 1:26-30)

How many times have we heard the Christmas story of the angels appearing to the shepherds in the fields announcing that this day a Savior was born to them, and that they would find the newborn Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger? How many times have we questioned why were shepherds the first to hear this Good News?

To answer that question we must ponder the pattern of God's behavior throughout the Old Testament and into the New, noting **His extraordinary bias toward the poor, the lowly, the powerless and the humble**. How He loved to confound the "wise" and powerful of this world with little ones whose humility and openness to His Will and His grace allowed Him to work His wonders through them in the sight of the people, for He knew they would give the glory rightly to Him and not to themselves. Oh how He loved the Anawim, the little ones! When Jesus came He would declare,

“unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” As creatures we are always children, owing our existence to the Creator. As those reborn in grace, we are children adopted into God’s profound Trinitarian life out of the sheer goodness of His Redeeming Heart; we could never earn, nor deserve, life-- either on the natural or on the supernatural level. We are always subservient to and dependent on God for everything. All life is pure Gift from the Author and Father of Life Itself, and the little ones are the first to gratefully and humbly acknowledge this Truth and live by it.

We see God’s choice in the child Moses, saved from the River Nile, who would lead God’s people out of slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land, a man with a speech impediment who needed his brother Aaron to speak for him. And again in the prophet Jeremiah, called by God in his youth, who protested, **“Ah, Lord God! I know not how to speak; I am too young,”** but God assured Jeremiah that He would provide the words for him to speak and he should have no fear. And then there was the orphan girl Esther, who would be chosen to wed the great King Ahasuerus, and through her wise and bold intercession would save God’s people from their enemies. Who can forget the mere woman, Judith, who would slay the dreaded Holofernes whom no man would stand against. But the darling of them all was the little shepherd boy, David, who killed the giant Goliath, whom the whole Israelite army feared, with a simple sling shot and a small stone guided by the hand of God in the fatal blow to the brow of the enemy. He would become the beloved Shepherd-King, anointed King in Israel’s glory days, from whose heirs a Messiah-King would come to shepherd God’s

people forever, and He would be called **“The Good Shepherd,”** for He would lay down His life for His sheep

God’s favor to the humble is even more wondrously displayed when He did not hesitate to cast aside His glory and come to earth as a little Child, born in the little town of Bethlehem, to a humble Jewish girl from an insignificant place called Nazareth. **Oh how God loves the poor and the humble! He chose to become one of them to save them from all harm. And how He loves to exalt them and humble the proud who oppress them.** Is it any wonder then that He should first reveal Himself to the simple, humble shepherds in the fields, those always so ready to hear good news and get up and follow it? Surely the shepherds were first to hear the Good News because they were real, simply themselves, unpretentious, free of the lust for power or glory. They remind us of the childlike purity of heart that must be ours if we are to see and hear God. They take us to that King of Kings who fulfills the promise to King David of old; that Good Shepherd Who would not only call each sheep by name but would literally become the “Paschal Lamb” slain to save all God’s sheep from eternal death. So, while the shepherds speak to God’s bias for the poor, they also challenge us to have the heart and mind of a child, always ready to be surprised and amazed at what God can and will do for us, always ready to follow His call. The heart of a child is pure and addicted to wonder! And the heart of a child will always cling to the Heart that calls its name and protects it from all evil.

In our own day, August 14, 1980, **Our Lady of America®** spoke from the heart of Heaven’s Shepherd-King to another little one, Sr. Mildred Mary Neuzil, hidden away in her

cloister, with a message desperately calling God's people back into His fold, to Faith and Purity and obedient love to Christ's Vicar on earth, while this Good Shepherd tries to protect them from wandering away from His Truth into the abyss of destruction.

Sweet child, beloved of my Son and cherished by me, my message has not been heeded nor have I yet found one to further the cause of renewal from within. The Presence of the Trinity within every human being is the focal point, the basis of interior holiness. From this will spring a deep life of prayer and a love for penance as the discipline needed to convert all peoples to a serious preparation for the coming of my Son and His Kingdom.

Dear child, there are those of my children who are faithful, among these are my priests and religious who live a life of prayer and dedication to the work of my Son. What a consolation they are to me, with what joy I watch them furthering the Kingdom. But there must be more of such self-sacrificing souls, many, many more. Until this comes to pass, peace will not come, rather much more of suffering will encompass the world. I wish to spare my children from this, but I cannot do it without their help.

You must try to make my people understand that the life of God within them is the source of their peace and happiness. There is no other way. This is what my Son came to teach and bring and it was for this He lived and died. Unless this mystery of God's Presence within is accepted and lived, peace will not come. It is the only way, believe me, my daughter.

Beloved daughter, you are not being accepted because you are a small one. But in the end all will come as I desire. Those who oppose you will receive light to understand. These good people mean well and if they are in authority it is for you to listen respectfully and obey. I will speak to them in their hearts and the Divine Spirit who makes all things clear will give them

wisdom and understanding. In the end they will do as I wish. So, have patience, dear one, it will happen as I have said and those who have opposed me will become my most ardent and courageous supporters. Until this comes to pass, wait in trust, knowing that I never fail those who place their confidence in me. My Son blesses you, be at peace.

(Diary, **Our Lady of America**,® Sr. Mildred Mary Neuzil, pg. 37)

On November 22, 1980, Our Lady spoke to Sr. Mildred of a heavenly mandate being given to our small nation of the United States in these words:

Beloved daughter, the United States is a small one among nations, yet has it not been said that “a little child shall lead them?” It is the United States that is to lead the world to peace, the peace of Christ, the peace that He brought with Him from heaven in His birth as man in the little town of Bethlehem. The Savior did not come to enter this world in a big city but a small town, again, a little one among many. Dear child, unless the United States accepts and carries out faithfully the mandate given to it by heaven to lead the world to peace, there will come upon it and all nations a great havoc of war and incredible suffering. If, however, the United States is faithful to this mandate from heaven and yet fails in the pursuit of peace because the rest of the world will not accept or co-operate then the United States will not be burdened with the punishment about to fall.

I was afraid that the burden of leadership would be too great for the United States without some special help from heaven. Our Lady assured me that Michael and the whole army of Blessed Spirits will give their assistance at all times. As the Queen of Angels she has loving command over them and they accomplish whatever she wishes. This made me feel better and the fears that I had left me.

(Diary, pg. 38)

And so we are led to the Wise Men who left all behind to seek the King whose star appeared in the heavens. Most writers confirm they were of a priestly cult, astrologers more than kings for they studied the heavens. Perhaps they came to be called wise because they were learned, and are sometimes called kings because the gifts they brought to the Child were gifts that would be offered to a king. They had heeded a prophecy that even the heavens would give witness to the birth of a great king born to a virgin and they waited and watched for Him. In them we see natural wisdom give way to the Wisdom of God, for not only did they seek the One promised, but on finding Him, radiant as the Son that rises in the East, ablaze with the glory of God all around Him, they were enabled to quickly discern the truth from lies, the evil spirits from the Spirit of God. They then left that place filled with the Light and Presence of the living God, considering all else as rubbish, as St. Paul would later say, when he, too, encountered the one true God in Jesus.

We see this Wisdom of God in Our Lady's warning to Sister, for us, about discernment of spirits:

Dear child, evil is so insidious that it often passes for good. The simple and pure of heart alone can detect the difference. Many good works and many a good person or persons are thwarted and destroyed by apparently good people who are manipulated by the powers of evil because they do not possess that finer sense of being able to detect a false spirit from a true one.

(Diary, pg. 40)

It has been said that the greatest evil is the one closest to the truth. The following words of Our Lord to Sister Mildred on July 13, 1981, teach us to find protection from the insidiousness of evil, to find true Wisdom, in Him alone.

Many unnatural acts are being committed in the name of love. This evil is being disguised and tolerated as an intrinsic right like any other. Even some of My priests and consecrated virgins are being caught up into this web of evil, not realizing its terrible consequences.

My dearest one, many false doctrines are being taught and for many the true Christ is never made known. The false prophets and self-proclaimed Messiahs are drawing many away from Me, the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the true Messiah who was sent and the only one proclaimed as such by My Father.

(Diary, pg. 40)

Seek Me for I only am truth, I only am the Christ.

Here, and here only, is the Star that we must follow, the only light that leads us straight home!

Copyright ©Contemplative Sisters of the Indwelling Trinity, 2009.