

Homily DSC Leaders Meeting

October 2024 Anne Lythgoe, OP

A reading from the book of Isaiah (52:7-10)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one
bringing good news, announcing peace, bearing good
news, announcing salvation, saying to Zion, "Your
God Reigns!"

Listen! Your sentinels raise a cry, together they shout for
joy, for they see directly, before their eyes, their God's return
to Zion. Break out together in song, O ruins of
Jerusalem! For God has comforted the people, has redeemed
Jerusalem. Our God has bared God's holy arm in the sight of
all the nations. All the ends of the earth can see the salvation
of our God.

How beautiful upon the mountaintop are the feet of the one who brings good news. How
beautiful upon the mountain -- this holy mountain, this holy place of conversation, of storm and
sunlight, of embrace. This mountaintop where we have abided in peace with each other these
last few days.

What shall we **name** *this* mountain? --where we have known the emergence of insight, energy,
and vision? On this holy mountain. What **have you seen** of a promised land? What can you see
from here now?

Yesterday we caught a glimpse of a new promised land. Are we on Mt Tabor
where transfiguration took place? Mt. Tabor where we behold the splendor of God shining on
the face of Jesus

[sing] We behold the splendor of God shining on the face of Jesus.

We behold the splendor of God shining on the face of the Son. (Refrain: St. Louis Jesuits)

Are we the disciples, who were **bewildered** before they were **brave**, **reticent** before they were **ready** to bring good news, announce peace, proclaim salvation, saying to Zion, "Your God Reigns!"

I have faith that this ***new transfiguration has already begun in us***. The glory of God radiating love, enfolding us with light. On this holy mountain, as the place where heaven and earth touch, the place of divine indwelling, the cosmic mountain as sacred center, and the place of revelation, ***we have been changed. We are different now.***

And like Peter, we may want this intimate moment together to endure and sustain us forever. And indeed, what we are feeling ***now can sustain us in*** the days ahead. We did not reach this mountain easily. We all had to find our way here, not by car, or train, boat or plane, but we have come to this mountain this moment, this place of knowing [and yet not knowing everything]. It took a long time to get here. It took more than 800 years to get here.

Here. Here, where we **all see each** other. Where we all **belong** to each other, here, where we all **love each other**. where we have always belonged. Here, where we live in the shelter of each other. On this holy mountain, we are good news, we are bearers of light with beautiful feet. Happy feet.

[please: Wiggle your toes!]

Those beautiful feet. You bring God's Word --you announce peace.

[sing] How beautiful on the mountain top are the feet of those who bring your word.

How beautiful on the city streets are the lips of those who speak your peace*.

God's dream for your congregation is tied up with everyone's congregation. Your vocation and continued call to leadership is forever linked to everyone here. On this holy mountain.

What good news will we bring home to California, to Michigan, to New York and Texas?

And as we have seen the glory of the Lord and have a glimpse of what Transfiguration looks like our time is near to departing this holy place and **bring an end to this** Encuentro. We begin our descent from Tabor to the beckoning road home. We cannot walk alone. We cannot turn back. On this holy mountain we have declared that we **will not walk alone**.

[sing] How beautiful on the city streets are the lips of those who speak your peace.

Like the 72 disciples, we set out on the road to towns and villages - to people hungry for hope. We are being called to begin a kind of **radical itinerancy** - an itinerancy of the heart, Radical itinerancy with a band of women moving together. Where the most important thing we bring to this journey is not a sack, sandals, or a sandwich. Not our property, but our purpose. Our being.

Because sisters this journey will cost you everything your heart, your soul, your past your present, your future and the heart and soul and past and present of your sisters. We need each other to **be all in**. Because a banquet awaits! A new kind of abundance will come to us if we move toward it. A banquet awaits us, not in some far-off heaven. But here. Right here.

As Amanda Gorman writes:

*We lift our gazes not
To what stands between us,
But what stands before us.
We close the divide,
Because we know to put
Our future first, we must first
Put our differences aside.*

[sing] How beautiful on the city streets are the lips of those who speak your peace.

In the Memphis speech in 1968 where the city's sanitation workers were striking the day before he was assassinated, Martin Luther King, Jr., told an overflowing crowd. He said, *"We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land"*

You remember Martin's era— a time of great civil distress in this country and most of us on this mountain were all there for it.

Martin proclaimed in his **I Have a Dream** Speech in 1963: he said

“With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. **With this faith**, we will be able to transform **the jangling discords** of our nation into a **beautiful symphony** of brotherhood. **With this faith**, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. And this will be the day -- this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:

*My country 'tis of thee,
sweet land of liberty,
of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died,
land of the Pilgrim's pride,
From every mountainside,
let freedom ring!*

And so today, in times such as these, we face a time of great civil distress in this country and there will be another kind of inflection point 26 days from now. We know it. We sense a certain dread of it. The whole world is tense about it and looking for a decision. Are we going to be a country of peace, integrity, and democracy or are we going to continue to tolerate open -faced lies as we struggle to know **what is ours to do in the pursuit of the truth**. No matter the outcome, there will be difficult days ahead.

[sing] How beautiful on the city streets are the lips of those who speak your peace.

On the city streets. Our times call us to speak God's peace not just in a **different tone**, but with a more **coherent voice** to raise up the important and fundamental values we want to live by and what our country and church are hungry for. People are still looking to us for guidance and a word of hope.

We cannot simply be a source of more noise but must be women of coherent and clear conversation, dialogue and diplomacy, collaboration and kindness and a willingness to stand up for those who are victimized, stepped on and disregarded.

So my call to you today, as you set out on the road before you back into the world, this precious and perilous world:

I enjoin on you today to:

Surround yourself with strong women,
women braver than you, smarter than you,
and don't envy them, admire them.
We need brave women
who weave a web of intention and hope,
of vision and ideas and action.

I enjoin on you today to

Surround yourself with good women
who know how to listen,
who know how to care,
from whom you learn to relate to the world,
women who teach you their power.

I enjoin on you today to

Surround yourself with women
who help you live as you are,
who give you confidence and affection,
who remind you that we are all one. [source unknown]

And until we see each other again on another mountaintop
Have faith. Have faith that

All shall be well.
All manner of things shall
Be
Well.

[sing] How beautiful on the mountain top are the feet of those who bring your word.

How beautiful on the city streets are the lips of those who speak your peace*.

END.

* *MUSIC: How Beautiful by Joe Wise © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc.*