

March 29, 2017

Is 49:8-15; Jn 5:17-30

Envision walking into a long, dark, smelly, unfamiliar tunnel without a flashlight. It would be so black and dismal you could only imagine it to be like some corner of hell. Yet this scenario could describe the daily existence of many people. Some of these people are living in war-torn countries like Syria, Afghanistan, or the Middle East. Some are living in countries that experience extreme poverty, like Haiti, Africa, or South and Central America. We often think that these people are too far away for us to help physically. However, others are living right here in our own communities. These people may also be sick, traumatized, suffering from mental illness, poor, lonely, or may be just down on their luck. These are folks within our physical reach and within earshot of our friendly and compassionate speech.

In today's Gospel from John, he shares that the Son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. Being perfectly clear, the Son can do whatever he wants; what he wants to do is the Father's will. He is a loving obedient and dependent Son who knows the Father's desires and acts accordingly. He doesn't blame the blight he encounters on others. He accepts others as his brothers and sisters in need. He exercises his free will just as we do. He could easily blame others for not meeting the needs of others. Instead he took this weight on his shoulders.

We may also be able to take on this additional weight on our path to the Lord. This may well be the only thing we can take with us when our time here is ended—pockets full of good deeds in service of others.

Reflection questions:

In today's life with all its hustle and bustle, did I take the time to be aware of someone in need of basic physiological or psychological support? How can I be more sensitive and meet the needs of others in real time? Am I embarrassed to support those in need?

What was my primary focus for today? Did I pray? Did I see Jesus? Where did I see him? Did I even say hello?

Reflection by Deacon Ed Shultz, St John the Evangelist.