

25 July 2010

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time + C

Marianist Lay Network of North America - 8th Continental Assembly

Ke Aloha, Ka Pono, Ka 'Ohana

Mystical Rose Oratory - Chaminade University - Honolulu, Hawaii

They are the most dangerous words you and I say in church and at other times of prayer: *"Thy kingdom come."*

Every word Jesus teaches us in "his" prayer is fine with us: *"heaven," "daily bread," "forgive"* -- difficult at times but, fine, *"lead us not into temptation,"* -- at times scary, but basically, fine.

But, we dare to pray: *"Thy kingdom come."* *"Thy kingdom come."* Have you ever read the fine print of these words? What if we prayed instead: *"Thy justice come," "Thy peace come," "Thy mercy come," "Thy politics come," "Thy economics come"*? Well, in reality, sisters and brothers, we are praying just that!

We are praying -- hoping -- dreaming -- for God's kingdom, God's reign to become a reality ... a country that knows neither border nor enemy ... a way of life that exults humility and compassion over celebrity and wealth ... a humanity that treasures the poor and the sick ... men and women who are truly ruled by the love of God, where compassion is the measure of all things.

And when we pray *"Thy kingdom come,"* we are promising to be co-creators with God, as we walk through each day, aware and responding to the needs of our sisters and brothers. This is the reign of God's justice, mercy and peace here and now. It's hard to keep religion safely personal and private if this is our prayer. To be sure our Marianist Community life would never be dull!

God's kingdom, the reign God envisions, doesn't quite mesh with the reality around us, does it.

But, the Lord's Prayer is really not our prayer. It's Jesus' prayer -- the one he has taught us to say by heart. To live by heart. It is Jesus who puts all our loyalties, all our hopes, all our loves on this table, asks us to look at them, then asks us to pray those dangerous words, *"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

"Thy kingdom come." Your kingdom come, O God, in our homes, in our offices, in our workplaces, in our classrooms, in our parishes, in our communities ... in every moment and every place of our lives as it is in heaven.

Sisters and brothers, that is the prayer Jesus teaches us to pray, a prayer that does not so much ask God to do what we want, but a prayer that asks that we do what God wants of us -- and being ready and willing to make God's will a reality in our daily life.

My dear friends, prayer worthy of God's ear, seeks God's grace -- God's love and strength to do the work God calls each of us to do this very day. And what is that work, but the work of forgiveness and reconciliation, the work of love and charity, the work of compassion, justice, mercy and peace. And in all of this, God is calling us, sisters and brothers, to build the reign of God, the community of *Ke Aloha*, where we are committed, present to each other, sharing essence -- the Holy Spirit of God; *Ka Pono*, always focusing our energy to balance -- for harmony, and well being and right relationship within self and community; and *Ka 'Ohana*, where we celebrate authentic Eucharist in the giving of our self to one another as Jesus give himself to us.

Brothers and sisters, in today's Gospel, Jesus gives us so much more than a prayer text. He teaches us the attitude necessary for authentic prayer, the attitude for authentic relationships, the attitude for an authentic life. Authentic prayer, authentic relationships that are not formulas or rituals, but an awareness of God's presence in our everyday life breath/essence *Ke Aloha* as we commit ourselves to be sister and brother to all people; *Ka Pono*, balancing, staying focused on the presence of Jesus within self and community; and *Ka 'Ohana*, like Jesus, breaking the bread of our lives and pouring the wine of our life blood becoming a Eucharistic family.

Mystagogia...

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