



ST. JOSEPH SPIRITUAL MINISTRIES A Congregation Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston

Staying Connected in this Uncertain Time

As we carry on here at St. Joseph Spiritual Ministries in remote locations, we are taking some contemplative time to reflect on a favorite Scripture passage that has held meaning for us in past difficulties and what it may be saying or inviting us to look at in new ways during this global crisis.

Philip said to him, “Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.” John 14: 8-12

Believe and you will see!

These last few weeks have offered us a diet full of John’s Gospel. The last chapters could seem like overkill on the imperative to “believe.” One morning, I counted six times it was used in fewer than twelve verses (Jn 14: 1-12). Then comes evening prayer and I draw the heart stone ‘believe’ as the gift for the next day. This prompted a stepping back to pay some attention to this new mantra. Thus, the genesis of “**Believe and you will see.**” And you can only guess who came into my imagination. Yes, Joseph, our Joseph, patron and companion. It was not that the Scriptures even hinted of Joseph as a possible model for these days. There is no record of a single word spoken by Joseph. His language is silence and it sometimes speaks louder than words.



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To say that Joseph was a Dreamer who believes is not enough. Rather, it was his attentive listening to his dreams that made all the difference. We are told that they evoked a prompt and generous response revealing a deep belief in what he heard. His dreams offered him a direction that moved him to courageous action.

In Luke’s Gospel, we read of a broken, weary world, not unlike our own, for which God has a dream and Joseph is the dreamer. I don’t sense any magic here. Rather, before his dreams could be heard and realized, Joseph, no doubt, found himself haunted by the horror of circumstances out of his control, maybe feeling powerless in the face of all that enveloped him. I suspect, like all of us, he wrestled with his dreams especially when the choice was between two goods. On the one hand, he had his ideals reflected in the Law (divorce her) and the acceptance of what was merely possible in his finite human condition. Could he have heard: “Believe and you will see”? Regardless, Joseph finally realized that he could not divorce Mary, no matter what.

He trusted that what had happened to Mary, to him, to them together was something greater than their comprehension. They were embraced by a Mystery that they had to take into consideration. The same is true for us.

In Joseph’s dreams, he received what was needed. Like him, we learn, somehow, that believing holds a promise of seeing. Maybe even that it is at the heart of surrender. The imagery of Joseph’s dreams is partly a way of describing his gradual recognition of God’s Spirit consistently at work in his life. With Joseph, we can appreciate that God is with us and for us. Joseph did not have the whole picture but just one step, one dream at a time. Is this our experience as well? Could “Believe and you will see” hold a promise for greeting our present reality?

Blessings, Maryann Enright, CSJ

St. Joseph Spiritual Ministries

Spiritual.Ministries@csjboston.org; 781-227-4730; 71 Walnut Park, Newton, Massachusetts, 02458.