

Lenten Reflection

Wednesday, Second Week of Lent March 15, 2017



By Sister Sandra DeNardis, CDP

In the Readings for today, we are met with two reactions to God's prophets.

In Jeremiah, the listeners who do not like the words of the prophet, conspire to note his every word and condemn him by his teachings. Because Jeremiah's message was equally disliked by the leaders of the Jews and the "man in the street," they knew that they would be offered no negative reaction from the Priests and Scribes. This message of Jeremiah was a message that called them to quit their unfaithful ways and return to a God who seemingly was running out of patience with them.

In the Gospel, Matthew speaks of the atmosphere in Jerusalem. The Scribes and Pharisees had stirred up the people to put an end to the message of Jesus that pointed the way to God. A message that was diametrically opposed to the path preached by the leaders of the Jewish people. The end was the same. Death to the Prophet!

This was a message that was so hard for the disciples and the other followers of Jesus to accept. His "poll percentages" were very high and, despite the words of Jesus to the contrary, they continued to ride the high tide of "good reviews."

We tend to want to dismiss the negative and whip out our water-color brush to cover over the dark spots of our life. We sometimes cannot bring ourselves to hear "dark." This is seen so clearly in this Gospel's account of the actions of James and John. They thought to use the "good reviews" to push for a high place in the Kingdom.

John and James were far from having a clear view of the meaning of their request. In the manner of all people, they refused to see the dark areas of their request. But these are men who chose to follow Jesus and his teaching, who left everything to be with him. As they entered into Christ's Passion, they realized that the darkness was a necessary component of the total picture. They saw that in order to see the whole picture, the darkness was needed.

As we immerse ourselves in the Passion, we know that the darkness is not the total picture. It just brings into focus the deep meaning of following Jesus. We know with certainty that the Resurrection brings the light. Our picture is complete.

