

REFLECTION

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***"Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger."
- John 8:1-11***

During this fifth week of Lent we are reminded that Jesus' calm heart of contemplation should be our guide in strengthening our dependence on Him, allowing us to minister with renewed and clear hearts. As I read today's Gospel, I was drawn not to his words or the main plot points that unfold, but rather I found my heart gravitate most towards this line:

"Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger."

I'm sure I'm not alone in what comes to mind when I think about the legacy of Jesus: turning water into wine, walking on water, healing the sick...my mind never lands on this action of lowering himself to the ground and drawing in the dirt with his fingers. He stops in his tracks, undoubtedly with everyone around Him holding their breath for His response to the scribes and Pharisees, and he takes the time for discernment, for contemplation. I imagine him allowing the spirit to surround Him and aid Him in this moment of being tested, strengthening Him to release the words of His father: the words of justice and love towards a woman who, like all of us, is more than the worst thing she has ever done.

Through contemplation and discernment we are made strong in our God, we are more clearly able to see the path of justice. We are able to withstand the tests and temptations so that we might fix our eyes on seeing God alive in those in front of us. As Lent comes to a close, let's choose to kneel down and take pauses to invite God in to each moment that we might always minister from a place of contemplation.

Focus: COMMUNITY

Can you imagine what our world would look like if we brought more contemplation into our relationships and our communities? If we allowed ourselves to be completely vulnerable and invite others to lean on us the way Jesus invites us into his embrace? To me this sounds a lot like the kingdom we so often talk about. I invite you to reflect on how you can weave contemplation not just into your own personal prayer life, but into your interactions to those you are closest to and still others you can invite into community.

PRAYER

This Lenten season, may we doodle on napkins, choose the longer way home, find a quiet corner in our day, for we believe that when we ponder your mystery, you reveal glimpses to our hearts.

May we turn down the radio, set aside the distractions of screens and bright lights, for we trust that in the silence you will speak loudest.

May we kneel down to the ground, write with our fingers in the dirt, and allow the spirit room to transform our hearts into cathedrals of more perfect love.

WHO INSPIRES YOU TO SERVE?

To me so much of embracing mission is learning about the local culture and people who have shaped the place God has sent me. Guatemala had arguably one of the most brutal civil wars in the region, lasting 36 years. Amidst the violence, an Indigenous Quiche Mayan woman, Rigoberta Menchú, worked against the brutal Guatemalan government and army on behalf of the rights of Indigenous peoples. Despite losing many family members to the genocidal violence, the Catholic faith being manipulated to tell Indigenous Mayan people to accept their poverty and persecution, and being exiled from her home country, her renewal in liberation theology and the strength of the Lord set her feet on a path of justice to fight for the human dignity of her people. Through continued contemplation, may we all find our hearts moved to not just long for, but to seek justice.