

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, July 28, 2019

God Hears Our Call

Written by Angie Windnagle

Genesis 18:20-32

Colossians 2:12-14

Luke 11:1-13



My husband and I have spent the summer house hunting. The exciting part is that we will be closing on our first home soon. The less than exciting part is that we have spent our fair share of time going through contracts, papers, inspections, and more. For all the fun, dreaming, and anticipation that goes into buying a home, it still remains a lengthy road when it comes to the legal side of things.

The legality of human matters is a point of justice. We can see on paper in black and white writing what is owed to us, and what we owe if we break our promise. In one sense, it is a necessary part of living. With our home, it ensured both parties were protected as we went through the long process of buying.

However, these earthly limitations can only take us so far in our spiritual lives. When we take our legal mindset into our relationship with God, we often miss the greatest love story being unfolded before us. The love of God goes beyond legality. This is the divine attribute that Abraham experiences in Sunday's first reading. How can it be that even though justice would demand reparation for the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, God would spare them all for just a few among them who are innocent? He stands in wonder that God's love would extend beyond the sins that filled Sodom and Gomorrah.

In many ways, we are living a present day example of this. Immorality, human prestige, money, and power have all become idols. We are truly a nation filled with sins that cry to heaven. And yet God still

extends His love and mercy to us every single day. At every Mass, every confession, we come face to face with a God who sent His only Son to be that innocent one among a people of sin in order to save us all.

This truth goes deeper as we hear the words of Jesus in the Gospel as he teaches us to pray. God is not just a far off divine being that we seek legal justice with but *Father*. And what's more, we can call on Him in our need to give us our daily fill.

What I find most beautiful is that this is followed by the story of the persistent friend and good father. We learn that God is more merciful and loving than we could even imagine and that He hears us when we call on Him. Good parents see beyond the black and white. If my child is hurting, I don't reprimand him for crying. I see his need beyond the tears, and do what I can to help him. We hear in the Gospel that this is just a fraction of how infinitely tender God's love is for humanity. When we seek Him, He will be found. When we call on Him, He is always there.

We are deeply loved, and in turn, we are called to follow His commandments and extend that love to all the world. But we need to be aware of the orientation of our hearts. Do we live as people stuck in the legality of what we think should be going on around us? Are we perpetually focused on other people's sins? Or do we live as people fully alive in Christ and his promise of forgiveness and providential care if we turn away from sin and follow him? In essence, are we living as people worthy of the call of the Gospel? Are we living as true sons and daughters of a Divine King?

Let us take to heart the words of the second reading, trusting that God has "obliterat[ed] the bond against us, with its legal claims ... nailing it to the cross." We aren't a people simply in contract with God to buy property in His dwelling if we do everything right. We are children of God, called to divine sonship,

redeemed in the Blood of the cross, and called to live as a witness to that truth.

Angie Windnagle

PRAYER

Awaken and enlighten us, my Lord,
that we might know and love the blessings
which you ever propose to us,
and that we might understand
that You have moved to bestow favors
on us and have remembered us.
Amen.

— *Prayer of St. John of the Cross*