

Lenten Reflection

Thursday, Second Week of Lent March 16, 2017



By Sister Mary Jane Beatty, CDP

“More tortuous than all else is the human heart, beyond remedy, who can understand it.”

Like a good poem, a noteworthy quote can express better than I, how I feel at times. This one, from today’s First Reading by Jeremiah, works for me today.

I get the feeling Jeremiah is describing his own inner struggles. Knowing this gives me hope. I too, like Jeremiah, find it hard to understand and make sense of the contradictions that live side by side in my own heart: my desire to give myself ever more fully to God versus my desire to be self-sufficient and take care of things myself; my compassionate side versus my tendency to be judgmental; my fear versus my trust. I could go on and on, but I think you get the point.

Jeremiah describes the contradiction of his own heart, his self-sufficiency, seeking his “strength in flesh”. He describes the results of doing that. He becomes a “barren bush,” living in a “lava waste,” of a “salt and empty earth.”

Almost in the same breath, Jeremiah acknowledges his trust and hope in God. Doing this he has to admit he is blessed! Who he becomes is so powerfully, so poignantly described in the beautiful imagery of “a tree planted beside the waters,” roots stretching to the stream; no fear of heat and “leaves [that] stay green.”

Today’s reading is consoling for me. Both are true; I have my inner struggles and I do love God. And like Jeremiah, I too can acknowledge that I am blessed. I am a tree planted in God’s love.

