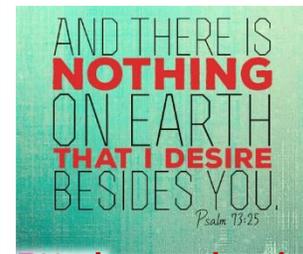


Be aware of evil influences



Is Jesus frustrated with me?



Understand and look beyond Earthly aspect

February 18, 2020 – 6th Week of Ordinary Time, Year 2

Is Jesus frustrated with me?

In the gospel reading, Jesus seems very frustrated with his disciples. They misunderstand what Jesus says to them about the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod, thinking that Jesus is referring to the fact that they have forgotten to bring bread. It is likely that Jesus can be just as frustrated with us at times. Like the first disciples, we too can demonstrate a lack of perception, a failure to hear what Jesus is really saying to us, a failure to see what Jesus is trying to show us. We need to keep coming before the Lord in the awareness that we do not see as he wants us to see or hear as he wants us to hear. Our eyes and our ears need opening, and, perhaps, the times when we think we see and hear well are the very times when we are most blind and deaf. We need the humility, the poverty of spirit, which keeps us praying, 'Lord, that I may see', 'Lord, that I may hear'.

Am I influenced by the evil mind-set of few in the Society?

Not everything in the Scriptures is to be taken literally. The language of the Bible is often very often symbolic and poetic. In today's gospel reading, we find Jesus speaking symbolically and his disciples taking him literally. He warns his disciples to be on their guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod. In reality, Jesus was using yeast or leaven as a symbol of evil, which was not uncommon in that culture. A little yeast can have a powerful impact on a large batch of dough. In a similar way, the evil of a few can infect the many. The disciples need to be on their guard that they are not unduly influenced by the mind-set of the religious experts, the Pharisees, and the political powers, like Herod.

As the Lord's disciples today, we all need to be on our guard against being unduly influenced by mindsets which are contrary to the mind-set of the

Lord. We need to keep immersing ourselves in his mind-set as it comes to us through the gospels and the other documents of the New Testament. In one of his parables, Jesus used the image of leaven in a positive sense, declaring that the kingdom of God is like a woman who placed a little leaven in a large batch of flour. The Lord wants us to be leaven in that sense, bringing the values of the kingdom of God to our world by how we live.

Am I failed to understand and look beyond?

In today's Gospel reading, the disciples were concerned that their food may not be sufficient. But they failed to see that they had the One who multiplied bread for four thousand and five thousand. They failed to understand that they failed to look beyond.

In our life journey, we too sometimes fall short of material and earthly needs.

Do we also get perplexed and anxious like the disciples? Do we also fail to see beyond and realize the more important needs of life? Do we also fail to understand that the presence of the Lord matters much more than any other earthly aspect?

Let us realize and understand that even when things seem too alien or situations seem to be too unfamiliar, God and His Power is close to me. We might sometimes feel that when we move away from familiar places/situations, we are out of the sight of God. But let us come to realize that even in "unfamiliar situations" and "moments of discomfort", God is near me!

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, let me realize and understand Your presence and power in my alien and unfamiliar situation. Let me not be influenced by the evil mindsets of few in society. Let me fill the apparent emptiness of my life with Your love and seeming vacuum within me with Your peace and passion.

Jesus, I Trust In You