

LENTEN SERVICE OF PRAYER

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Trinity Chapel

Can You Drink the Cup?

Holding the Cup: The Cup of Joy

As We Gather

*Henri Nouwen begins his deeply personal book, **Can You Drink the Cup**, with the story of his early vocation to the priesthood and his ordination in 1957, at which time his uncle, a priest, gave to Henri the gold chalice that he had used for many years. In his later years, while living and working at the L'Arche Daybreak Community, Henri reflects on Jesus' question to James and John: "Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" The cup becomes a metaphor for life, and the question for all of us becomes "Can we hold the cup of life in our hands? Can we lift it up for others to see and can we drink it to the full?"*

Welcome

Opening Prayer

On these days of Lenten journey, Christ goes with us side by side. While we gather here for worship, May our lives be focused with praise and care. As we sing, pray and listen, May God's Spirit deep within us come alive. And may this time of worship, Be for us a constant guide.

Reading of Scripture Matthew 20: 20-23

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. And he said to her, 'What do you want?' She said to him, 'Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' He said to them, 'You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.'

Reflection

Closing Prayer

**Send us forth, Lord, on this journey and call us to faithful discipleship.
Call us forth to repentance and new life.
Call us to listen and to hear your Word.
Call us to serve and respond in your Way.
Call us to live always with hope and love. Amen.**

Reflection Questions

Nouwen moves us to hold our cups and see not only the sorrow but the joy. “The cup of sorrow, inconceivable as it seems, is also the cup of joy. Only when we discover this in our own life can we consider drinking it...The ‘cup of sorrows’ and the ‘cup of joys’ cannot be separated...Joys are hidden in sorrows.”

- What comes to mind when you think of joy?
- How do you respond/react to Nouwen’s assertion that you will find joy when you look into your sorrows? What turns sorrow into joy for you?
- “...but the joy that comes from living together in a fellowship of the weak makes the sorrow not just tolerable but a source of gratitude...connect my own vulnerability with the vulnerability of those I live with. And what a joy that is! The joy of belonging, of being part of, of not being different.”

What role does Christian fellowship/community play in producing a life of joy for you? What role would you like it to play?

- “Jesus holds his cup filled with sorrow but with joy too. It is the joy of knowing that what he is about to undergo is the will of his Father and will lead him to the fulfillment of his mission.” What mission has God given you? What is the “joy that has been set before” you (Hebrews 12:2)?

(Discussion questions are from the Henri Nouwen Society.)