



Our Need to be Holy

"What matters is not what we do but the deepness and self-abnegation with which the serving soul enters the life, the movement, and will of God and so can be used for divine purposes....We must get rid of the pestilent, deadly notion that the amount of things we get through is the standard. The steadiness with which we radiate God is the standard." - Evelyn Underhill "The End for Which We Were Made"

The word that keeps coming to me is "agency." There is so much going on in this country that I don't like or understand. I read the beatitudes and then read the newspaper and wonder what to do with that gap. It seems as if we as a nation are drifting further and further away from a holy communion-which is, after all, our yearning and calling as Christians.

What am I to do about Kenosha, Wisconsin? Is it enough to say I will pray for them? Is it enough to try to find someone to blame? Is it enough to ignore it because it upsets me and it's in another state?

This reflection is not going to be filled with answers because I don't have any, but I do know that I must start with the question of agency. What can I do now? Back to Evelyn Underhill: "The steadiness with which we radiate God is the standard."

I am not saying lock your doors and ignore the world. Nor am I saying don't get involved politically, nor should we avoid making our voices heard in the public sphere, nor refrain from calling out behavior that is unjust.

My issue is where to begin. My issue is how to get beyond feeling as if I am merely a spectator watching Rome burn.

I think I need to begin with my heart and then my head and then I may get to my body. I want to align my heart with God's heart. I want a whole and holy vision of my fellow human beings as children of God trying to find their way instead categorizing others as righteous or unrighteous. I want to discard my own smugness about the correctness of my political views-which is the veil that keeps me from the paradise I seek. I want a larger narrative than just the right and wrong-the enlightened and the misguided-the lovers and the haters.

Let's remember, Jesus came from nowhere; so did St. Francis and St. Julian of Norwich and on and on. What mattered was not their public prestige. None of them had college degrees or held any political office. What mattered was that they were so immersed in the Truth and the Way and the Life, that their goodness radiated out of them and was contagious.

Yes, let's be part of the public debates and enter the public square. Yes, let's stand up for justice around race and gender, income, sexual orientation and hospitality to the stranger. But let's do all of that from the center. Let's do all of that as an invitation for all people to step into a larger vision of themselves and this world. We do not need to be right. We need to be holy. That's our work.

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FOR CHRIST. FOR THIS TIME. FOR ALL TIME.

