

Saturday 5th Week of Lent 2020 – The Explorer

Ezekiel is very encouraging today as he tells of a God who searches us out to bring us home to him – a God who is proactive in bringing us salvation; after all he did send Jesus to us. The challenge is that we learn all about the message but do we really live it? Life is a journey of continual discovery, there are new wonders to be found around every corner. Anthony de Mello SJ tells the story about an explorer.

The explorer returned to his people, who were eager to know about the Amazon. But, how could he ever put into words the feelings that flooded his heart when he saw exotic flowers of breath-taking beauty and heard the sounds of the forest night? How to communicate what he felt in his heart as he sensed the dangers of the wild beasts or paddled his canoe over treacherous parts of the river?

He said, “Go and find out for yourselves.” There is no substitute for personal experience. To guide them however, he drew up a map of the Amazon. They seized upon the map. They framed it in their Town Hall. They made personal copies of it. And everyone who had a copy considered himself an expert on the Amazon; for did he not know every turn and bend of the river, and how broad it was and how deep, where the rapids were and where the falls?

It is said that Buddha steadfastly refused to be drawn into talking of God. He was probably acquainted with the dangers of drawing maps for potential scholars!!

This is why it is so important for us to make the journey with Jesus in Holy Week to experience the sufferings, the challenges, experience the love of those who were faithful to him throughout. It is in making this journey with him, having our faith truly challenged, experiencing some of the despair that sought to drag him down that will change the way we live our lives in the future.

Two explorers are lost in the desert...

...they're dying of thirst, and have been wandering for days. Finally, off in the far distance, they see a camp of beautiful tents. Hoping that it is not a mirage, they crawl desperately towards it. On arriving, they find that it's a market. They stagger up to the first tent they see, and say to the shopkeeper "Water, please! Water, we're dying of thirst!"

The shopkeeper says to them "I am sorry, my friends - I have no water. All I have is this bowl, full of jelly, sponge and custard, topped with cream and shaved chocolate." Perplexed, but undeterred, the explorers stagger to the next stand, only to be met with the same answer. At all of the dozens of stands in this market, all they are offered are these bowls, not a drop of water to be had.

As they leave the market, one explorer says to the other "Well, that was very strange". The second explorer replies: "Yes, it was a trifle bazaar".