

Reflection Friday Week 4 – 2022

The first reading reflects the infinite mercy of God not only towards David but towards us also. It shows that God desires not only to forgive but to enable us to live good lives that is of benefit to everyone around us. In the Gospel Herod was more concerned about his self-image than the injustice of beheading John the Baptist. Mark has the decency to note that Herod went against his conscience and was deeply sorry for taking John's life. Whatever else Herod may have been or done, he recognised the goodness and truth of John's word and the challenge he was to him. We, like God, should never judge people for what they have done: their actions, yes, but not the person. God's mercy is infinite and, being made in God's image, we too have the full capacity to forgive.

Ronald Rolheiser OMI (adapted)

John Shea wrote a poem about John the Baptist who, in prison, hears the dancing overhead, aware of his impending death. Herod is about to give Herodias' daughter half his Kingdom and John accepts the consequences of this, believing himself to be only half a man. Why? Because, as the poem suggests, he's only a half-prophet who can do only a half-job.

Thus thinks the Baptist:

I can denounce a king, but I cannot enthrone one.

I can strip an idol of its power, but I cannot reveal the true God.

I can wash the soul in sand, but I cannot dress it in white.

I can devour the word of the Lord like wild honey, but I cannot lace his sandal.

I can condemn sin, but I cannot bear it away.

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John the Baptist is aware of both his strength and his impotency. He can point out what's wrong and what should be done, but after that, he's helpless, with nothing to offer in terms of the strength needed to correct the wrong.

Yet, Jesus said, ***Among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist!!!!***

Self-esteem/Self-image

A six-year-old daughter says... "Daddy, what happens when you look in the mirror and you're ugly?" Being immediately concerned, Dad says "Sweety, did someone say something mean to you? You are beautiful". She quickly replies, ***"No daddy, I was talking about you!"***