

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 2002 Mt 16: 21-27

- 1) Back in the late winter of 1968,
 - a) Our art teacher came into our fourth grade classroom in tears,
 - b) And told us that a great man named Martin Luther King had been shot.
- 2) I didn't know who this Martin Luther King was.
 - a) But whoever he was, I could see she was upset.
 - i) She talked about how important he was,
 - ii) And she spoke about a talk he gave, in 1963, in which he had a dream.
- 3) I didn't understand what the dream was,
 - a) It wasn't until years later that I actually heard his speech and realized what that beautiful dream was all about.
- 4) Have you ever had a dream? A hope so profound; a desire so strong, that you were willing to do anything to see it realized?
 - a) Perhaps it is the dream of owning your own home.
 - b) Perhaps it is the dream of starting your own business
 - c) Perhaps it is the dream of a college diploma; if not for yourself, then for your children.
 - d) Perhaps it is simply the dream of being a citizen of this land.
- 5) For Dr. King, and for so many others,
 - a) That dream was the dream of a land where all people were treated equally.
 - b) A dream so strong that people were willing to pray for it,
 - c) Work for it,
 - d) Sacrifice for it,
 - e) Suffer and even die for it.
- 6) When I understood that then I understood why my art teacher cried. Because after Dr. King's death, as riots filled our street and whole cities went up in flames,
 - i) Not only had Dr. King died; so had his dream.
- 7) Have you ever had a dream that died? May do especially nowadays.
 - a) For millions of people the dream of owning their own home
 - i) has ended in the nightmare of foreclosure.
 - b) For millions more the dream of their own business
 - i) has ended in the nightmare of bankruptcy.
 - c) The dream of a college diploma is fast becoming a fantasy,
 - i) as tuition costs skyrocket
 - d) And as for the dream millions have of becoming US citizens,
 - i) it seems that all they will ever be is America's new slaves.
- 8) America was founded on a dream - a dream not unlike the one Dr. King had;
 - a) a place where all people are created equal,
 - b) and therefore have an equal right to realize their dream.
 - i) and it is especially hard when such beautiful dreams die.
- 9) Jeremiah understood this.
 - a) For Jeremiah had what is perhaps one of the most daring of dreams;
 - i) he had a religious vocation.
 - b) He would serve God as a prophet;
 - c) he would speak God's word to God's people

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 2002 Mt 16: 21-27

- i) What an honor!
 - d) But then he heard the word he had to speak;
 - i) IT was a word of warning that God's people were going to be attacked;
 - ii) that their armies would be overrun,
 - iii) and unless the king surrendered, their land would be destroyed.
 - e) Jeremiah did not want to speak this word,
 - i) but as a prophet he could not but speak it.
 - (1) As a result he was ridiculed;
 - (2) as a result he was persecuted;
 - (3) the king imprisoned him
 - (4) and people sought to kill him.
 - f) That is why Jeremiah accuses God of tricking him
 - i) into believing his life would be one way
 - (1) when it had turned out so differently.
 - ii) For what Jeremiah is really saying is, his dreams have died.
 - g) St. Peter understood this too.
 - i) For in last week's Gospel
 - (1) Jesus said he was the Chosen One; the Messiah; the Son of God;
 - ii) Which meant for Peter
 - (1) Jesus would kick out the Romans,
 - (2) purify the temple
 - (3) and establish an everlasting kingdom.
 - iii) Moreover Jesus had chosen Peter to be his Rock,
 - (1) upon which he would build his Church,
 - (a) which would prepare for this coming kingdom.
 - iv) IF Jesus was King, well then Peter was number two;
 - (1) It was the fulfillment of a dream!
 - v) But then today's we hear Jesus say that while he was chosen
 - (1) He was chosen to die.
 - (a) There was no mention of kingdom;
 - (b) No talk of glory;
 - (c) Just suffering and a cross.
 - (i) And not just for Jesus, but for all who follow him.
 - h) That why Peter rebuked Jesus.
 - i) For what Jesus was saying was not only was Peter's dream dead,
 - (1) but so was everyone else's.
- 10) And if that is all that Jesus had said,
- a) well then Peter would be justified in his rebuke,
 - b) Jeremiah in his complaint,
 - c) my art teacher and everyone else in our despair at the death of our dreams;
 - i) what every they may be.
 - ii) Because that is what dreams do; they die.
- 11) But that is not all that Jesus said.
- a) When he said he would be killed he did not stop there;

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 2002 Mt 16: 21-27

- i) he said that on the third day he would be raised.
- b) He said it quickly; you might have missed it; surely Peter did;
 - i) For the death of our dreams can deafen us;
 - ii) they can blind us to what Jesus was promising in those words.
- 12) Either way Peter did not understand it; none of the disciples did;
 - a) not then; not on the day Jesus was crucified and buried;
 - i) it was only after Easter, that Peter began to understand
 - (1) what the resurrection of Jesus would mean to him
 - (2) and all of Jesus' other followers
 - (3) in the months and years and centuries to come.
- 13) And that is that
- 14) Dreams have a way of rising again.
- 15) They did for Jeremiah's people;
 - a) when after decades of war and destruction, exile and death they were allowed to rebuild their promised land.
- 16) They did for Peter and the other disciples;
 - a) When on Easter their dead friend Jesus appeared to them, forgave them, ate with them and filled them with his spirit.
- 17) And whether or not we are Republican or Democrat, Independent or just don't care,
 - a) Anyone who watched TV on Thursday night
 - b) and saw what was happening in Denver
 - c) could not deny the reality of what was happening there on the 45th anniversary of the day Martin Luther King gave his famous speech about that dream he had.
 - i) So many people interviewed there had actually been there in Washington when Dr. King gave his speech
 - d) For for them and for so many more the choice of Obama as a CANDIDATE for the presidency was proof and promise
 - i) that though our homes can be repossessed and people oppressed
 - ii) though our rights can be denied and our jobs lost;
 - iii) though apostles can be rebuked and prophets imprisoned
 - iv) Though preachers can be assassinated and even the Messiah can be killed;
 - e) Dreams are bulletproof.
 - f) And that if there is a God who is stronger than our suffering; stronger than our death and that someone raised Jesus to life. Well then that God will raise us up as well; In fact God already is; because the resurrection starts with a dream. What is your dream today?