

Feast of Our Lady of the Angels - August 2, 2017

Reflections by S. Mary Ellen McAleese

Sirach 24:1-2,16-22; Ephesians 3:16-21; Luke 1:26-33

GOOD MORNING AND HAPPY FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS.

AND A DOUBLE HAPPY DAY TO THOSE OF OUR ASSOCIATES WHO ARE CELEBRATING A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF YEARS HERE AT OLA...

THIS IS A PICTURE OF THE PORTIUNCULA CHAPEL IN ASSISI WHERE THE FRANCISCANS HAD THEIR ORIGIN.

Francis often said to the friars, "my sons, see that you never abandon this place! If you are driven out of one door, reenter by another, for this place is holy indeed!

OUR LITURGY BEGINS WITH A PRELUDE OF BELLS WHICH ARE A LIVE RECORDING OF THE BELLS OF SANTA MARIA DELGI ANGELI.

THESE BELLS ARE INTENDED TO CALL US TO WORSHIP AND MOVE US INTO THE SILENCE AS WE LISTEN WITH OUR HEARTS AND EARS.

I HOPE THAT NO ONE WILL BE TOO DISAPPOINTED TO DISCOVER THAT MY REFLECTIONS WILL NOT BE DIRECTLY ABOUT FRANCIS NOR ABOUT THE PORTIUNCULA AS SUCH...I WILL BE WEAVING SOME OF THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGES THAT FEEL RELATED TO FRANCIS BUT MY DEEPEST INTENTION IS TO SEE HOW WE HAVE A CALL AND A MENTOR FOR US GATHERED HERE **TO BE CHURCH** FOR EACH OTHER AND ALL WE ENCOUNTER IN OUR LIVES.

WISDOM, LIKE SO MUCH OF LIFE IS A **MYSTERY** AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE. WE EXPERIENCE/**KNOW** THIS INSIDE US AND WE SEE IT/**LIVE** IT EXTERNALLY BY OUR BEHAVIORS. IT MOVES FROM INSIDE – OUT UNTIL THERE IS NO SEPARATION. WE LISTEN/**HEAR** INSIDE AND MANIFEST/**ACT** OUTSIDE.

WISDOM IS THE LOVE THAT FILLS US SO COMPLETELY THAT THERE IS NO ROOM TO DOUBT THAT WE ARE ALL ONE. IT IS NOT RELATED SO MUCH TO WHAT WE DO BUT WHO WE ARE AND THE INTENTION AND ATTITUDE THAT GUIDE OUR LIVES. WISDOM IS NOT TO BE CORRELATED IN ANY WAY WITH LEARNING OR EDUCATION. WISDOM IS PURE GIFT TO ANYONE/EVERYONE WHO SURRENDERS TO HER.

WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT ANY FORMAL EDUCATION THAT FRANCIS MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE HAD BUT HIS LIVING REFLECTS FAR BEYOND JUST WORDS THE DEEP MEANING OF WISDOM (all are brothers and sisters).

WE HEAR THE GREAT PROMISES MADE IN WISDOM SPOKEN TO FRANCIS AND TO US...."I bud forth delights and abundant fruits....all we have is meant to be shared...those who work with me will not fail."

WE ARE NOT CELEBRATING A BUILDING CALLED A CHURCH BUT WE ARE CELEBRATING **THE CHURCH that WE ARE!!!**

IT TOOK FRANCIS A WHILE TO UNDERSTAND THIS WHEN IN PRAYER HE FIRST HEARD "GO REBUILD MY CHURCH" HE IMMEDIATELY SET OUT WITH BRICK AND MORTAR TO REBUILD SAN DAMIANO AND THEN THE PORTIUNCULA....

THEN LISTENING ONCE AGAIN BUT PERHAPS MORE WITH HIS HEART THAN JUST HIS EARS, HE HEARD **GO**...

BE MY CHURCH.....**BE** MY PRESENCE

BE MY LOVE IN THE WHOLE WORLD (a world much like today)

FAR AHEAD OF OUR TIME, FRANCIS LIVED WHAT WE CAME TO NAME OUR COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

...Enriching and Embracing Everyone

...Creating and Providing Opportunities to have

A Sense of Belonging

of Community

of Equality

EVEN IN THE MIDST OF MANY CHANGES OVER THE YEARS, SOMEHOW THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM BRINGS TOGETHER...

THE RIGHT PEOPLE

IN THE RIGHT PLACE

AT THE RIGHT TIME

AS EPHESIANS READING WOULD REMIND US...

...strengthened in your inner most being with power from God.

...rooted and grounded in love.

...filled with all the fullness of God at work within us.

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY OTHERS AND THERE WILL BE OTHERS AFTER US
STANDING IN THIS SAME PLACE...

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS.

WE **ARE** THE CHURCH...LITTLE LIKE THE PORTIUNCULA OR BIG LIKE S. MARIA
DELGI ANGELI.

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER, THOSE INSIDE MATTER...IS THERE ALWAYS ROOM
FOR ANOTHER IN MY HEART EVEN IF MUCH DIFFERENT FROM ME?

IT IS OURS TO BE AND DO
TO CARE AND SHARE.

...do not be afraid

...you have found favor with God

...who is with you!

SO THIS IS A GREAT FEAST FOR ALL OF US AND EACH OF US AS WE GATHER
AT OLA ... as resident, associate, part of our faith community or visitor.

MAY WE RECOGNIZE EVERYONE AS SISTER AND BROTHER CONNECTED BY
OUR HEARTS AND WILLING TO BE OF SERVICE.

I WANT TO CLOSE WITH A LINE FROM A SONG BY KAREN DRUCKER WHICH
FEELS SO APPROPRIATE...

we are all angels but we only have one wing

...so we need each other to fly...

AND BECAUSE OF THAT, WE ARE **BLESSING** TO ONE ANOTHER.

AMEN...SO BE IT..