

60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Reflection

Today's readings are interesting. People must have been surprised at the change in Paul after all that he had done -- all the persecutions and deaths that he caused. Was it probable, or even possible, that he would, that he could change? Well, I would just like to mention something that took place 60 years ago. I won't mention any names, but as one of my brothers-in-law said: "She won't last two weeks," and one of my sisters said: "They're not going to keep you." And I know which ones they are! Could it have partially been because my mother used to tell me that I was a Street Angel and a House Devil? Well, God chooses us for the work we are to do, even before our birth. And I am still a Sister of St. Joseph!

Each mission that God gives us is preparation for what is to come. Paul first preached to the Jews. Then he was called to the Gentiles. I was in the education field for 29 years and now I have been at the jail for 27 years. We are all used as instruments for carrying out the divine purpose, and we are given the graces needed to do God's will and God's work. Remember that Paul wasn't accepted. People questioned his right to speak and preach. We are the same – not knocked off a horse, but we know, each one of us knows that we are to preach Christ's message. We, too, will be challenged and questioned probably throughout our whole life. And as God used Paul and Elijah, he uses us to bring his beauty and into our world, to set an example. And like this quote from Edwin Markham: "All that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own." Guess we really need to set good examples, don't we?

You and I believe of God who has a beautiful heart and because of that heart, you and I live in a world where resurrection takes place. Because of God's heart, life will finally and forever win out over death. And we see that in both the First Reading and in the Gospel. In the story of the widow who lost her only son, Elijah called out to God to restore the child who had died; and in the Gospel where Jesus touched the coffin of the son of another widow and brought him back to life. In these miracles we see that God has truly visited his people and that he loved them. And become filled with awe as we come into tune with God's heart. What starts on the inside each of us, what starts as a little seed, will surely grow and blossom and bear fruit. Then things can never be the same again – not for any of us. We are invited to come close and share God's life. When we do, we can let God draw near to us. During the time when we are broken, he can heal us! We do have a God with heart, but we don't always see the miracles God is working in the midst of the noise and confusion of our lives. We don't always sense his restoration. But one day God will right all the wrongs of the world and everything will be made new. We have seen a glimpse of what is in God's heart –it is love and life and healing.

So let us learn to trust him and to rely on him more fully. Then we will experience his grace in a new and fresh way. Let us believe in the miracles and the gifts he has brought into our lives and that he will always continue to do so. He has certainly worked them in mine!

I would like to close with two-stories. First, once upon a time in all the Catholic schools across the land, the nuns would ask how many of the girls wanted to become nuns and, of course, all the little girls raised their hands. That went on for a few years until either the nuns stopped asking, or it was more likely, that the students didn't raise their hands. Most wanted to eventually get married and have a number of children. Now there was one particular girl who preferred marriage, etc., but God ordained differently. She is celebrating 60 years as a nun today is filled with gratitude and love for all of those who have been in her life. And truly loves being a Sister of St. Joseph. Talk about miracles! Talk about gifts!

Next I would like to tell you about a very wealthy man who looked out one night over all that he owned and was very pleased with all of his possessions. Then a knock came at his door, very persistently, so he finally answered it. It was one of the people who work for him and lived in a very simple house with his wife and several children. The man immediately said that he had had a dream and needed to tell him about it. He said that he dreamed that the richest man that he knew was going to die that night and he really felt that he should tell him. Then the man went home to his family. The rich man called his doctor right away and asked him to please come because he was going to die that very night. The doctor protested about coming as he had just examined the rich man during the week and found him in quite good health. However, he did go to the mansion and stayed the night. In the morning all was well so the doctor left. A knock came at the door shortly after the Doctor left and there stood a little boy, the son of the man who had come the evening before. The boy looked at the owner and said: "Please, Sir, would you come back to my house with me -- my father died last night"!