



ALL SAINTS CHURCH
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

2010 Fortification For Crucifying Experiences

A homily preached by J. Edwin Bacon, Jr.

April 1, 2010 - Maundy Thursday

My imagination about Jesus is that at his core was this gentle peaceful humming passion.

I imagine that the core of Jesus' heart and soul sounded like the gyroscope I played with as a little boy. I would lie on my tummy, set my gyroscope turning, put my little boy ear to it and I could hear this soft humming note of music.

Unlike my toy gyroscope, which when it wound down it began to wobble, my imagination is that Jesus was sufficiently attuned to or aware of what kept his gyroscope singing that beautiful note of grace that even in moments like tonight when he knows he is about to be betrayed, denied, captured, tortured, unjustly tried, and even killed. Even tonight he knew what would keep his soul humming that beautiful note of centered grace.

They are all here – those things that kept Jesus' grace note humming –

Being still and knowing that God is God – Jesus does that after this liturgy in the Garden of Gethsemane. You are invited to do that after this service. This church will be occupied all night long with people praying, anchoring their souls in the stillness where God comes to everyone.

Jesus also knew the importance of a simple meal with friends. He institutes the Last Supper, the Lord's Supper, the Mass, the Eucharist this night when he takes bread and wine, gives thanks for bread and wine, breaks and shares bread and wine. That simple act carries powerful energy for keeping you and me and all human beings centered in grace.

Jesus also knew that simple humble acts of service to one another – particularly the washing of one another's feet has a way of grounding us in concern for one another's bodily health that sacramentalizes our concern for one another's spiritually wholeness. People have a hard time being spiritually whole when our bodies aren't being cared for. It's the opposite of what will happen tomorrow. Pilate will wash his hands of a situation. Tonight, Jesus washes the feet of a situation. Washing my hands of a situation is an act of irresponsibility. Washing the feet of a situation is an act of solidarity.

Jesus is already reconciled to the fact that life is full of crucifixions and deaths. We just cannot get around that. Crucifixions happen. We cannot live a crucifixion-less life. But crucifixion without grace really can be avoided. We just have to know what it takes to keep the grace notes humming in our lives – stillness, community, humble solidarity – stillness, supper, and service.

Amen.