

A Short Story - Deepest Darkness
by Deacon Gerry Palermo

Take care, then, that the light in you not become darkness.

But as to what is within, give alms, and behold, everything will be clean for you. (Lk 11:35, 41)

American Christianity is in the deepest of darkness. Let us take a walk through the “Woes” with confidence we can embrace truth and build a new resolve to be Christ to the world.

First and foremost, pray.

Early in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 11, He said to them, "When you pray, say... (Our Father)". Jesus gives two prescriptions subordinate to the priority of prayer to the Father.

1. Don't allow your light to become darkness.
2. Give alms.

The category 5 storm was approaching. The family knew they needed peace but they knew little of peace. Mikel had his troubles and we have come to bury him. It is so hard to not judge and it flows out of the family members. It is a source of love disappointed not judgment. But I remind them what Jesus said: “I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will (Lk 10:21b)”.

The loving whisper of God is hidden deeply within Mikel. Hidden within so it might grow and become fruitful. Even now we recall how light began to shine through and he gave Alms of time and attention so difficult for him to give. We praise God the light in him, we intercede for him and we bless him. We bless the ground that covers him now. We sanctify as we are given to do.

Do you see him at all?

You build the memorials of the prophets and temples of worship. You dare to use the name of Jesus for your own gain. Indeed you are like the unseen graves and you cause those who follow you to sin greatly. You sit upon the Seat of Honor and you Glorify Yourself. You teach others to Glorify themselves too. Nice house you have. Nice suit you wear.

Do you worship by way of the beatific work of God?

The category 5 storm was approaching. I knew where to find them. After a brief reunion like greetings, “Where will you stay, what are your plans?” They are used to Deacon who gets right to the point. Very good, very good. What about “Jimmy”? OK, good that, will work. Deacon, can we talk outside? Regret, death, grief. “Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord...”

Street girls help each other to the extent addiction allows. Even as the quantity insufficient. Let us pray. I place my hand upon her forehead, she presses in so the prayer works. ‘Lord, grant protection from the raging storm outside us and the raging storm within us. Renew us in your love and help us discover the beauty you have created which we are’.

I see the light in them buried under piles of dross and my hope for them is within their Alms that they might be made clean. Almsgiving frees one from death, and keeps one from going into the dark abode. (Tobit 4:10). Alms giving makes us Light sensitive.

Don’t throw empty theology at me! Don’t use scripture as a weapon. I know Jesus, the one who frees from sin. You reduce salvation to a formula. A magical incantation is your theology. You have taken away the key of knowledge because you prefer ignorance for all. In your religious practices you recruit and ‘you make him a child of Gehenna twice as much as yourselves (Matt 23:15b).

Do you clean the cup and yet your heart is set to do plunder and grow evil?

The category 5 storm was approaching. He alternates between lashing out and being grateful. He has confusion and unclear thinking. Does it matter why? Homeless and penniless it takes time to reverse decades of bad decisions and hard luck. Society offers a quick meal and a shove out the door. Complicated cases, yes, like a drowning person whose hand is just out of reach and safety. And the river continues to flow. We have hardened our hearts. The beatitudes are a slogan.

Do you pay tithes of mint and of rue or perhaps nothing at all? There is no right judgment within you and the love of God is not cultivated by you.

.

Why do you impose on people burdens hard to carry? You are innocent? Innocent of what?

You are not innocent when you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them.

The quantity of empty Christianity is astounding and growing every day. I trust God to awaken you and enliven you to truth. Stop stripping Catholic social teaching to be a shell of itself. Stop wagging fingers at the addicted and displaced. Stop making immigrants into monsters!

Your light is very dark when you fail to see primacy is in the needs of others.

Yes, we are saved by Grace. Beware, Jesus himself has warned us and given us prescription.

1. Pray to the Father.
2. Don't allow your light to become darkness.
3. Give alms.

Are you angry now?

Peace be with you.

Deacon Gerry

Disclaimer – Names, times and places are fictional or obscured to protect the privacy of others without distorting the essential truth of the encounter.

References:

(none)