

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community + Spirit of Christ Mission
Twenty-second Sunday Autumn Ordinary time ~ September 2, 2018
Deuteronomy 4:1-2,6-8; Psalm 15:2-3,4, 4-5; James 1:17-18,21b-22,27; Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23
Homily ~ Fr. Ed Hislop

Today with an ancient Jewish word, “(sh (e) m(a),” (which means gather, hear, listen, pray, observe, act, believe), Moses summons the people, all the people, every person of faith—summoned together to pray, listen, believe; to lament, speak, change and remember.

The “shema” summons to gather was heard in every possible circumstance. It comes still every day at sunrise and sunset: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!” The summons often came in times of trouble, doubt, scandal, violence, hatred and faithlessness. But the call was also made in times of hope, joy, faithfulness and loving care of others.

“Hear O my People,” gather, and do not scatter in times of trouble, come together in moments of loss, in days of affliction, just as you do when all is well.

These are words we desperately need to hear today. Hear, O my people and do not be silent. “Let the word of God that has been planted in you, save your souls.” By that Word and that Promise, strengthen your hearts, let your weary bones be made strong and your vision restored.

These are days, in our scarred and deeply wounded church that we must hear and heed the summons to gather and not disperse; to be “doers of the word and not hearers only...” These are days to cease being “deluded” by the trappings of

power, title and prestige, and by the delusions and so called traditions of days long past.

These are days to be cautious of slanderous words, and pompous pronouncements by those whose hearts are far from truth.

The words of Jesus are strong, sounding angry: “This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me...” “You disregard God’s commandment, but cling to human tradition.”

Maybe in the call to prayer he heard that morning, this Christ of God sang the same Psalm we just sang: “Whoever does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.” Who harms not a brother or sister, and embraces truth in the heart and slanders not with the tongue. “Whoever does these things will not be disturbed.”

As surely as Moses did so long ago, Jesus in the midst of everything, summons us again, now, today: Hear me, all of you and understand: the labor to which you are summoned, the work you are called to do, even in times of distress, is “to care for all in their afflictions and keep oneself unstained by the world.”

Shema... Hear, listen, lament, remember, observe, believe, pray, and **BE DOERS OF THE WORD AND NOT HEARERS ONLY...GATHER AND DO NOT DISPERSE.**



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