

Flourishing as Friends of Jesus (who really like jazz!)

Some Notes for the Reflection on April 12, 2017



As Christians remember Holy Week each year,
I always think of the way the blues
has had such a profound influence on jazz.
Dan's wonderful composition that we just heard
embeds that truth in my soul.

The blues gives voice
to what the Christian tradition has called "necessary suffering."
It's a recognition that suffering is a meaningful part of life:
that we grow down through suffering;
that there is a redemptive pain in suffering;
that accepting transformative anguish
is a path to spiritual maturity.

Richard Rohr is the latest friend of Jesus
who provoked me to think about this.
"Before the truth sets you free," he says,
"it tends to make you miserable."

I think of the way the blues faces the reality of suffering,
but does not give in to it,
does not allow it to dominate and define reality,
is truly inspiring and a word from God.

May that word of resilience feed our souls
yet again throughout this Holy Week of 2017.

The Brentwood Manifesto of the Christian Faith *How We See God, the World, Humanity, and the Future*

*In the beginning, God created the world
and delighted in its diversity and development.
God created human beings
and nourished them to flourish in blessing all of creation.*

*But humanity rebelled, rejecting the limits of their power.
Their rebellion against God's vision of justice, peace, and joy
brought tyranny, suffering, and death.*

*God never tired of calling humanity home
to work in common to cultivate the well-being of the world.
Through the law and the prophets,
God's Spirit invited love of God, love of others, and love of self
as the empowering energy for engaging in this mission.*

*In a unique and decisive act of reconciliation and revelation,
God overcame our alienation and loneliness.
God took flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth.*

*In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ,
the creation is restored to its original purpose.
God continues to craft the completion of this redemption.*

*Through the church universal, visible and invisible,
the Holy Spirit empowers people
to participate consciously in their reconciliation
through worship, learning, fellowship, and service.*

*By God's grace in Jesus Christ through the work of the Spirit,
we know what it is to be loved and to love
amidst all the problems of the world.
We are equipped and sent to sow seeds of God's SHALOM
in all of our circles of influence.*

*In the end, God's love, healing, and forgiveness
will transform heaven and earth
and bring justice, peace, and joy to full realization.*