



Dear People of God: I hit a wall yesterday, or should I say a waterfall! As I processed this feeling of being overwhelmed on a day like many others of the last weeks, general malaise about the state of the world, concerns about how to pastor to my parish and the hospice patients, heartsickness from missing my family so much, anxiety as David left to do "necessary" errands, I realized none of the above had anything to do with this weight?!

I had come to the moment which I did not think would come. I was staring straight into Holy Week when churches are closed, palms are already stored away, Eucharist bread I baked at the beginning of Lent is still in the freezer not to be consecrated this Lent, vestments hang in an eerily quiet sacristy and the altar is pretty well stripped though Maundy Thursday is a week away! The world has already turned upside down before it is to turn upside down or right side up again.

How do I make this coming Holy Week sacramental and holy enough?

I agonized until it hit me between the eyes...it is not about me! God has this! I am a mere instrument being unnecessarily diverted from the truth of it all, from the cross, by my ego! Palm Sunday, the Triduum, and even Easter will happen no matter what, just as God happens no matter what! We don't need palms, we don't need bread (except the bread of life), we don't need buildings; we need sanctuaries and sacraments and being church!

Which leads me to the balm for today, hopefully.

Every Palm Sunday I spend time with a reading from Martin L. Smith which speaks to the overwhelming nature of Holy Week in ordinary times (as though there were any) and in my self care yesterday I decided I needed it then! I felt like I was being drowned in a waterfall and he speaks to this emotion, which comes upon him every Holy Week!

He talks about the feeling of disproportion, of inadequacy, when standing at a cataract. Any vessel you hold to the waterfall in hopes of catching something gets knocked away and we are left with nothing but disappointment and more inadequacy. And yet, " the only hope of scooping anything at all is to hold the cup up carefully at the very edge, under a lost thin trickle. ...I'm standing as near as I can get to the cataract, the thunder and roar of the water is deafening. ...But maybe this helpless state of just standing aside, this overpowering sense of not being able to do anything about it is the only sort of adoration I'm allowed just now." (quoting Ida Gorres)

And there it is...adoration! Not a term used as often in Holy Week as Christmas but nevertheless the key for me. It seems closely related to worship but closer still to reverence. And the act described, of holding a vessel to the edge of the powerful cascade, seems sacramental. To catch a cup full, a thimble full, of the waterfall of God's love and mercy this week will be enough. It need not be grand; it need not be as usual. It need be with adoration.

I invite you to be gentle with yourselves and to inch close to the edge of God's grace pouring into the world, even now. Hold your favorite cup firmly to the edge. It will be consecrated by your authentic adoration; it will be enough. Blessings, m

Rev. Dr. Martha Tucker

"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with your God"

--Micah 6:8

*"We seldom notice how each day is a holy place Where the eucharist of the ordinary happens,
Transforming our broken fragments Into an eternal continuity that keeps us."*

— John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Invocations and Blessings

I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding.

— John O'Donohue