

Standing in The Gap

I. PSALM 15:1-8 - A PSALM of David

¹ ...Preserve me, O Lord,
...I have put [my] trust in Thee.

² I have said to The Lord,
Thou art my GOD...

⁵ The Lord is The Portion
of my inheritance...
It is Thou that wilt restore
my inheritance to me.

⁶ The lines are fallen
unto me in goodly places:
for my inheritance
is goodly to me...

⁸ I set The Lord always
in my sight:
for He is at my right hand,
that I be not moved. ¹

¹ 1, DRA, PSALM 15:1-8. Equivalent to PSALM 16 in The KJV and The NAB.

II. Ministry Inheritance in The Lord

What is our ministry inheritance in The LORD in caring for others? SD is a 45 year old single mother who, having lost Hope in life, sought escape in alcohol and street drugs. She was found by rescuers on a street in cardiac arrest after an unknown downtime. Paramedics restored her heartbeat in the course of resuscitation efforts. Since then, Mrs. D has laid mostly unresponsive on a ventilator in the hospital ICU, one of many broken persons constantly placed in the charge of caring hands.

Last week I met Mrs. D's brother at her bedside. He knew the situation was grave, but shared their family was praying for "a miracle." Yesterday I met her uncle at the bedside as the neurologist came in to examine her. The uncle shared that his beloved niece was opening her eyelids for her family. The Doctor determined that her brainstem functions were mostly intact. She opened her eyes and grimaced to deep pain for the Doctor. Though there is always Hope, the prognosis was poor for SD to wake and return to her family with her higher brain functions intact.

III. Called to Stand in The Gap, Let The Minister Not be Moved

Returning alone thereafter to SD's bedside, I prayed over her as her family had asked. As I finished my prayer with a hand on her shoulder, I opened my eyes and looked at SD's. I placed my hand on Sherry's forehead. I lamented for SD, her parents, brother, uncle and children.

Though I could not answer the "Why, GOD?" questions of this evolving tragedy, I became aware that GOD and SD's family had invited me to stand in the gap between pain and healing, sorrow and peace, death and life itself. And I asked The Lord to shine The Light of His face upon them.

This lady and her loved ones were my portion in The Lord that day. GOD had drawn my lot and they were my inheritance in that moment. There in my spirit, I saw that The Lord was in my sight. It was a goodly place to serve - to be called to stand in the gap on behalf of GOD's people. Therefore I was not moved for the sake of JESUS CHRIST my Redeemer and the people in need who are placed in my care.

IV. Claiming One's Daily Lot in The Lord With a Willing Heart

How does one claim such daily lots in ministry with a willing heart in the face of tragedy that overwhelms? Saint “Padre Pio” was ordained as a Catholic Priest just before World War I and served for 50 years at a monastery in Italy. “He was a renowned spiritual advisor, confessor and intercessor whose life was devoted to The Eucharist and prayer” for the sake of CHRIST and others.²

Father Pio provides the answer to my question: As a servant of CHRIST, “Be watchful... and never place too much trust in yourself or count excessively on your own strength. [Rather,] ...advance more and more... [in] The Way to perfection, and practice Charity more and more, for Charity is the bond of Christian perfection. Throw yourself confidently into the arms of The Heavenly Father with childlike trust and open wide your heart to The... Gifts of The HOLY SPIRIT, Who is only waiting for a sign from you in order to enrich you... to do good!”³

As we are “sent forth” in The Name of The Lord again today as His ministers, let us be open to the lot of our inheritance, to stand in the gap in Charity for those placed in our care. For GOD will not call us to stand anywhere on behalf of others in His Love where He does not adequately equip us by His SPIRIT, Where The Blood of CHRIST does not cover, where The Father Himself does not stand with us. For all such lots are Holy Ground.

² 2, Memorial, “Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.” Mass – for “Wednesday of the Twenty-Fifth Week in Ordinary Time,” The Magnificat, Volume 11, Number 7, September 2009. Meditation of The Day for 9/23/2009, p 321.

³ 2, Saint Padre Pio, “Proclaiming The Kingdom.” The Magnificat, Volume 11, Number 7, September 2009. Meditation of The Day for 9/23/2009, p 324-325, paragraph 2-3.

V. A Prayer

Let us come together before The LORD,
Each according to our own Tradition.

The LORD be with you!
And also with you!

[silence]

LORD GOD,
We place our Hope and trust in You
To give us The Gifts and Grace
Necessary to receive our daily lot in this Ministry
By standing in the gap in Your Name
On behalf of those you place in our hands.
By Your holy Love,
May Your Supreme Goodness
Always be in our sight.
For You are our Portion
And those in need are our inheritance! ⁴
AMEN.

Let us go forth to love and serve The Lord!
Thanks be to GOD!

⁴ 3, Adapted from Commentary by Padre Pio, “PSALM 16 – Divine Goodness.” Bertanzetti, “Praying The PSALMS with St. Padre Pio,” p 32, paragraph 3.

VI. REFERENCES

1. “The Douay-Rheims American Edition (1899) [Bible].” Bible Works 7. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
2. “Magnificat.” The Catholic Herald, Ltd. Yonkers, New York.
3. “Praying The PSALMS with St. Padre Pio.” Eileen Dunn Bertanzetti. Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Huntington, Indiana. 2006.