

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

February 17, 2019

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 17:5–8 + 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16–20 + Luke 6:17, 20–26



Reflection by: Sister Gina Scaringella

My to-do list reaches the sky. Perhaps you can relate! As a first-year high school campus minister, I could easily drown amid the details. I must remember to make requests for stipends, supplies, and space. Then there are parent letters, PA announcements, and prayer services to plan. And of course, there are Masses and meetings to organize, not to mention the retreats! These are just the highlights. All are good things, necessary means toward a worthy end—that of preaching the Good News. Since I am a newcomer, I often need twice as much time as someone who is seasoned. Thank you, God, for colleagues and students who take time from their own full days to show me the ropes and lighten the load. Oh, and speaking of colleagues, and especially students, *they* are the reason I am here, aren't they?! Am I giving them what they need? Am I getting to know them? Am I helping to point them toward Creator, Christ, and Spirit? Or am I barely holding on?

Today's first reading from Jeremiah reminds me *what* I must hold on to. It's not my task list, not my calendar, not even my designs for how my ministry should help people. *What* I must hold on to is *Whom*. I am not that Whom; it's not about me! "Cursed is the one who trusts in human beings, who seeks [her] strength in flesh." When my carefully crafted task list unravels, do I grumble? What about when some students remain unfazed by the Good News? They face pressures an older generation never knew. When my preaching (also carefully crafted) falls flat for some of them, do I despair? Am I a "barren bush in the desert," the one who "stands in a lava waste"? When I rely on myself, immerse myself in my own agenda, yes!

But what if I am the "one who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord"? Blessed is this one! Can I surrender *my* way and become instead the tree that is "planted beside the waters," stretching out my roots to the stream that is Life?

The task list will grow. Students will yawn. (Or some will, anyway.) Withering heat will threaten. But my "hope is the Lord." God, the Source of Life, upholds life, even in drought. God tells Jeremiah—and us—that we "trees" who trust in God will stay green and grow fruit ... yes, even in drought!

What must I do to stand in God's promise of life and not the "lava waste"?

What must you do? How's your to-do list? What, or Who, is your hope?