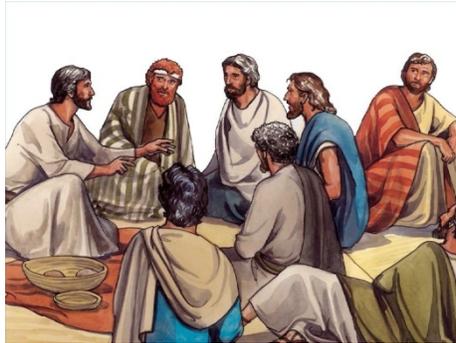


THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
August 23, 2020
Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 22:19–23 † Romans 11:33–36 † Matthew 16:13–20



Reflection by: Elise Redmerski, OP

During his time in prison in Nazi Germany, the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, grappled with the question that Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" After much reflection it led Bonhoeffer to conclude that the most important question for him and for the church was, "Who do we say Jesus is for us in today's world?"

"Who do you say I am?" Growing up in the 1950s I heard many answers to that question. The world was not in turmoil so I readily accepted that Jesus is the Messiah, my Protector, my Savior, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and The Son of God. He was defined as a friend, loving, gentle and kind. But, like Bonhoeffer the gospel for today led me to ask how do I still define Jesus in 2020?

In Today's world...

Who do I say Jesus is with the racial tensions in our country?

Who do I say Jesus is in countries fighting religious war?

Who do I say Jesus is when someone we love dies or is seriously ill?

Who do I say Jesus is in the midst of Covid-19?

Who do I say Jesus is with all the violence, plight of refugees, the homelessness, and the hungry?

Who do I say Jesus is in political arenas?

How as a community do we answer that question?

Am I really asking where Jesus is in all that is happening? And what is he doing about this difficult time? Rather should I be asking, "Where am I/we in all that is happening and what am I/we doing to make a difference?"

How we personally and communally answer this question should determine how we live and respond to the Gospel today. Yes, Jesus still has all the attributes and titles that I learned in the 1950s but I can't bask in those answers without defining Jesus in today's world and responding.

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