

Advent Reflection

December 14, 2019

Memorial of St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church



from Psalm 37: "Trust in the Lord and do good, that you may dwell in the land and be fed in security. Take delight in the Lord, and He will grant your heart's request."

from the Gospel of Luke: "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

The readings from the memorial of St. John of the Cross describe two apparently different experiences. The Gospel of Luke mentions carrying a cross, and the Psalm mentions taking **delight** in the Lord. Well, which is it?

The season of Advent, or what the rest of the world thinks of as the Christmas season, is filled with so much to do. Beyond all the normal holiday busyness, teachers have the added stress of finishing the quarter and the semester, grading final papers and projects, administering exams, and preparing for the second semester. All that does sound like quite the cross to bear! But is that the cross Jesus speaks of in the Gospel?

I believe that the call to work in Catholic education is just that, a calling. And when I am frustrated and tired, I try to remember that Christ called me to this vocation. Maybe the trials and challenges of being an educator in today's world are part of the cross I am called to bear. If so . . . time to return to the Psalm: *Trust in the Lord and do good; take delight in the Lord.*

Yes! **Trust** in the Lord; **trust** that the work we do every day to educate and form young men is part of Christ's plan. Take **delight** in the Lord; celebrate the great work that we as a school community are able to accomplish. **Trust** in the Lord; we wait in Advent, **trusting** our Lord will return. Take **delight** in the Lord; rejoice that we are a people of hope!

My mother would have celebrated her 79th birthday today. During the holidays, I miss her, sometimes very acutely. But I **trust** that she is with my father and our Father. I take **delight** knowing the Lord has prepared a place for her, for my father, and for me.

During this Advent season, may we all find the **delight** in **trusting** in the Lord and working to do good, carrying our crosses with hope in our hearts.

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