

## THE TIME IS RUNNING OUT

I was listening to some Sports' Talk Radio this week when I learned that the Eagles had hired a new Head Coach. Not all the fans were amused. Not all were happy with the selection mostly because the person they wanted to be the new Coach had not been chosen and they didn't know the particular person who was selected. I noticed that as divergent as the callers were they all used a certain common expression as they made their point. The expression in question? "The way I see it is..."

The way I see it. My perspective. My take on things. My considered opinion. My deep conviction. The way I see it. That's the way we talk because that's the way we think. Not when it's about Football but all the time. Whatever the subject is. The way I see it is. It's about comfort level. It's about the way I see life. See people. See situations. See what is good. See what is true. My viewpoint. It's about what I have come to know about everything and I have fashioned this into a viewpoint. My viewpoint.

When Jesus of Nazareth burst on the scene we hear his message proclaimed in the Gospel from Saint Mark this morning. "The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent. Believe the Good News." My friends, what is the Way of Jesus? The Way of Jesus is a way of seeing. It is a way of perceiving. It is a way of selflessness. It is a way of service. But here's the thing. In order to live this way we have to recognize that there are some things in our lives that have to change. Because the way Jesus sees things is not always the way we see things. And we have to give the nod of assent to Him, to His Way. The way of seeing things—from Jesus' perspective—is what marks us, delineates us from other people who we live with on Planet Earth at the present time. That is why we are called Catholic Christians. It's because of the way we see things.

What differentiates the way of Jesus from the way that many of us see things? Often our own viewpoint has developed over our lifetime and factors in all manner of experiences both personal or learned about. One of the things that animates us in the developing of our viewpoint is things we should steer clear of or avoid, things could hurt us or damage us or even destroy us. There are things we are afraid of. We are afraid of what might happen. We are afraid of what people will think. We are afraid of what we might lose. We are afraid for our kids, our parents, our friends. We are sometimes afraid of our past and of those things we struggle to keep a lid on and press down so they never see the light of day. We are afraid for what might happen to our jobs, our community, our parish, our Church, our country, our world.

You will notice that one underlying thread through all I just mentioned is—FEAR. Fear is a very common element underlying much of how we see things. But the way of seeing of Jesus is not a fear-based way of seeing. It is based in trust. We trust our God. We place our trust in what is being revealed in our world by God all the time. We place our trust in what Jesus of Nazareth lived and taught, suffered and died for. God is doing something in Jesus that God wants to do in each of us and all of us. God offers forgiveness. God has a design on how best to live this life and navigate through our time on earth. In Jesus we get a glimpse into the way he sees things.

What is Jesus' way of seeing? Jesus holds us in his heart—always. He says: “I pray for them, Father. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.” We pray to him BUT HE PRAYS FOR US. Jesus always lives to make intercession for us. That is what he came to do. That is how he sees us. At this moment He is lifting your situation before the Father and that prayer is unending. During this pandemic he prays for each of us. “Father, I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.” Keep us from the enemy. The Lord knows that the enemy is real and still prowls about this world seeking someone to devour. He sees that. He has conquered the enemy and defeated death. There is no longer a need to be afraid. No. The need is to believe. To place our trust in Him. That trust is fundamental to how he acts but also to how he sees things. And so it must be for us. Our way of seeing is often fear-based. His way of seeing is always trust-based. We have to put on the mind of Christ.

And this mindset must touch every dimension and aspect of our lives—personal, relational, and sexual. It must extend to our lives in the world of business, and into our community and most especially it must impact our politics whichever Party we favor. The Way of Jesus is a Way of Seeing. If we want to live with him then we must align ourselves with him. And that means that like the citizens of Nineveh we have to change our ways and repent. That means that we must recognize like the citizens of Corinth of old that time is running out. That means that we must hear with the citizens of first century Galilee that we have to change our way of seeing things and embrace the way of Jesus. There is no other way that makes us safe in this world. No other way that saves.

May the Lord bless us today and give us his peace.