



Come and See!

Week of February 8, 2026

The Word...

“The just one is a light in darkness to the upright”
(*Ps 112*).

“You are the light of the world.
A city set upon a hill cannot be hidden;
either do they light a lamp and place it under the dry-goods basket,
but rather they place it upon a lampstand,
and it illuminates all who are in the house.
So let your light shine out before humanity,
so that they may see your good works
(*Mt 5:13-16, literal Greek*).

Pondering the Word...

“The just one is a light in darkness to the upright” ...or a big, fat pain in the neck to those who choose darkness.

Let's give a shout-out and a prayer for safety to the people who courageously carry the light in the face of oppression. We praise all those, not just in the US, but all over the world—especially those whose acts of nonviolent resistance don't make the news—for their bravery and commitment to the light. (And here's a question I've been reflecting on; you may want to, as well: citizens of color and immigrants in the US have faced extrajudicial violence for decades. Would our collective anger be the same if those killed in Minneapolis were a Hispanic woman and a young Black man? Let our outrage at the murders of two young, white American citizens wake us up to the reality that this type of oppression is nothing new.)

“You are the light of the world.” “Me? Really, Jesus?” It's too easy for me to find the closest bushel-basket and hide away. Or even when I do take a stand, it's for “all who are in the house” already, the echo chamber, people who agree with me. “Jesus, you tell me to let my light shine before all humanity. How do I find the courage to face those whose view of “the light” is nationalism and xenophobia?

Living the Word...

Jesus answers, “The same way I did. Faith in goodness, faith in love, faith in God. And oh, by the way, faith in humanity as well. Remember, I promised to be with you through the presence of the Spirit ‘that searches all things, even the deep things of God’ (1 Cor 2:10). Before you venture out into the fray, access my Spirit. Allow the Spirit to lead as you consider the deep and profound realities of faith and life in the light.”

Each of us can do something. Don't do “nothing” out of fear or feelings of impotence. As we approach Lent, consider fasting from a new perspective: fast from fear, fast from apathy and inaction. Consider almsgiving not just as money but also as time. There are charitable organizations in every community that need financial and volunteer help. And of course, pray. Pray for those oppressed AND for those who oppress. Lament the state of the world but do so in faith and hope. *“True lament is not born from that trite sentiment that the world is bad but rather from a deep conviction that it is worthy of goodness”* (Cole Arthur Riley, from *This Here Flesh*).

Personal Reflections and Ideas...

Mon, Feb 9: As [Jesus and his disciples] were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him (Mk 6:53-56). How do the locals “immediately” recognize Jesus? They must have been paying close attention! News of his healings spread like wildfire but it’s not like they saw a photograph! **Provision: Do I...do you recognize Jesus?** We can rely on Matthew 25 for this—“When did we see you, Lord?”—but remember: the goats didn’t recognize Jesus *but neither did the sheep!* This poses no problem if you’re able to see God’s image in everyone! Or perhaps you are the one in need of Jesus’ touch.” When we hurt, it can be hard to pay attention to where or in whom Jesus might be. Pray the Spirit will open your eyes and heart to the outreach of others. (An interesting twist to consider: in yesterday’s reading from Isaiah, God tells us as we reach out to care for the poor, our “wound’ shall be quickly healed.” Sometimes, a good way to lessen our own suffering is to share in another’s, just as Jesus does with us.)

Feb 10: *“If the highest heavens cannot contain you God, how much less this temple which I have built!”* (1Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30). Here’s some levity for today, a story told by the late Cardinal Carlo Martini, the Catholic Archbishop of Milan. There was a wedding in a small Italian village church. A reception was to be held outside, but the skies opened. The guests gathered the food and wine and brought it into the tiny vestibule. The family convinced the pastor to allow a brief reception in the back of the church. Well, this was an Italian wedding, so... as the revelry continued, the pastor grew agitated. To calm the anxious pastor, the young parish priest said, “Now remember, Father, Jesus was once present at a wedding banquet.” “I know Jesus was present at a wedding,” the pastor snapped. “YOU don’t have to tell me Jesus was present at a wedding! But they didn’t have the Blessed Sacrament there! 😊 **Provision: Let’s not get too caught up in formalities!** Read the gospel today! I’m not discounting reverence in worship and ritual, but God loves our real-life revelry! God is “uncontainable.” God is nowhere and everywhere. But come to think of it, make sure to invite God to the party!

Wed, Feb 11: *“Commit to the LORD your way; trust in him”* (Ps 37). **Provision: Read and reflect on Psalm 37.** Wow! I am so moved! This psalm is so relevant; it is a prayer for us today. Read all 40 verses. *“Do not be provoked by evildoers... it brings only harm...those who do evil will be cut off... Those whose steps are guided by the Lord may stumble, but they will never fail, for the Lord holds their hand...those at peace with God have a future.”*

Thu, Feb 12: *The LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from the Lord* (1 Kgs 11:4-13). Two weeks ago, we heard that God promises David a dynasty to rule Israel forever. Last week, David instructs Solomon to remain faithful. Now we hear David’s dynasty doesn’t even make it through round two! Solomon, like his father, falls prey to lust and power. But unlike David, Solomon does not repent. **Provision: Don’t let shame keep you from God’s mercy.** I wonder if Solomon was ashamed, that he was unforgiveable. That’s the sin of pride, putting oneself beyond the merciful reach of God. I knew that feeling a long time ago, but God’s grace and mercy kept pursuing me. Don’t ever underestimate the depth of God’s mercy.

Fri, Feb 13: *“Ephphatha!” Immediately the man’s ears were opened and he spoke plainly* (Mk 7:31-37). We, like the people in today’s gospel, are “astonished” by Jesus’ miracle cures, so much so that we may miss the healing that occurs. This deaf man “finds his voice.” No longer an outcast, his dignity is restored. **Provision: Be a healer today.** If you have the time and commitment, accompany someone to restore their dignity. But how about just greeting everyone with a smile or a kind hello? Reaching out a gentle hand or a kind word to an immigrant? Don’t ever underestimate your ability to show God’s mercy and compassion. (Unrelated note: if the apparent math error in today’s OT reading bothers you, as it did me, there are two explanations: one, the “odd-tribe-out” was Levi, the priestly caste that had no inheritance; two, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were treated as one, the southern kingdom in Jerusalem. The latter explanation is the more common 😊).

Sat, Feb 14: *“Where can anyone get enough to satisfy them?” ...How many loaves do you have?”* (Mk 8:1-10). Have you ever felt overwhelmed, like the disciples today? Where can anyone get enough to satisfy the great needs in our communities? **Provision: Jesus asks you, “What do you have to give?”** It doesn’t need to be a big deal or something great. Allow Jesus to bless you and your gifts. You’ll be amazed at how much you’ll have to share! (Note: Ash Wednesday is next week, so we return to Provisions for the Journey for Lent and the Easter season.)