Hello, God’s People:

Jesus’ active ministry has begun. He has given his “mission statement” in the synagogue in Nazareth and selected his inner circle of 12 disciples. Questions about him and challenges to him abound. There is rejoicing and outright rejection. It seems that Simeon’s prophecy has come true: “This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed.” Luke 2:34

Here are some of Patricia’s reflections on chapters three through six, and the need to turn our faith into action.

“When it comes to scripture, I am always asking myself: How do I apply scripture to my life?

In chapter three, John said bear fruit in keeping with repentance. The crowd, tax collectors and soldiers were asking their own how-to questions. John’s message had three specific responses:

1 Share what you have with those who need it.

2. Whatever your job is do it well, and with fairness.

3. Be content with your earnings.

John’s mission was not to bring comforting messages but rather to challenge the people to more Godly living as he prepared the way for Jesus. I ask myself how is his message challenging me today?

To share more with people who need it; to share the talents God has blessed me with; and to share hope and faith with people who are hurting.

In the story that begins at Luke 5:17, Jesus was impressed with the friends of the paralyzed man and what they were willing to do to help a friend. This is faith in action.

I saw that personally when my electrician shared his talents with a widow in need. Faith in action. The two lessons for me were to share my faith with my God given talents and to be humble to accept the gift of faith of others who are living out their faith.

Moving forward in our conversation of Luke, here are two questions we might think about asking:

What message impressed you in chapters three through six?

How do you apply that message to your own life?”

As we continue our journey with Jesus and encounter his teaching, we might keep in mind the following words from New Testament scholar Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis:

 “We cannot repeat often enough that the Gospel can never be reduced to Jesus imparting moral teaching, even of the truest and most sublime kind. … The heart of Jesus’ teaching concerning godly attitudes and behaviors is actually *himself*, since his primary function in coming among us is not to act as a moralist but to reveal his Father by revealing himself through word and deed.” – *Fire of Mercy, Heart of the Word, Vol. IV*

Grace, peace and abundant blessings. And we’ll be looking for you this Thursday on Zoom.

Fr. Dion and Patricia Jennings