

Monday Quotes



Grain

“The descent of the Spirit tells us what really matters.”

–Richard Rohr

Field

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’” 4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”
Mark 1:1-18

Thoughts

A woman who had grown weary of her spouse’s years of verbal abuse, which increased during his terminal illness, told the story of a savvy chaplain who visited them in their home during her husband’s final days on this earth. The chaplain was able to read the room and after being with them for a while, he asked the husband, “If you could have done anything differently in your life, what would it have been?” To the woman’s great surprise, her husband looked over at her and responded, “I would have treated her better.” It was a memory she held on to.

Perhaps many people on their deathbeds have flashes of realization. Maybe some will grow up to realize what matters for the first time after wasting years living in ignorance. We are reminded during the Advent season to be alert now. “Prepare the way of the Lord.” Dwell in that place of real security, and not one that leads us to blame everyone around us without repentance.

John the Baptist baptized with water. So do we. We welcome all who want to be members of the church or who are infants and children with families that want them to be part of a congregation to be baptized. For us, baptism is a one-time sacrament expressing God’s gift of love and belonging. But there is a deeper transformation and repeated conversion that comes with the Holy Spirit, who meets us in the wilderness. Through our suffering or what we have learned, we can grow compassionate. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we are able to pray and confess how we are not as superior or inferior as we thought. We can live connected as citizens of the earth.

Let us prepare our hearts for the celebration of Christmas and always for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. God, help us to be alert to the love you want to teach us. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy