

Fr. Martin's Reflection – January 28, 2024

If Today You Hear His Voice, Harden Not Your Hearts

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The response to our Psalm is very interesting, **'if today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.'** Over the previous two weeks, one of the themes found in our scripture readings was the theme of being called. First the call of Samuel, and then the call of the disciples. Today in our Psalm response the call is to us, **'if you hear his voice.'** The fear for many of us is, would we recognize the Lord's voice? Do we know where to go to listen for God's voice? What does it sound like? Does God speak to everyone or just to the chosen few?

For us to recognize God's voice, we must want to hear it. We must practice listening, we must practice sitting still. We must learn to recognize the voices of this world – work voices, sports voices, music voices. Yes, God can speak to us through them but it is not God's first port of call. God first and foremost speaks to us in the scriptures. Making scripture a part of our daily diet, just as breakfast, lunch, and dinner, should be part of our daily life. Just as food nourishes us, so will scripture nourish us in our relationship with God.

As many of you know, at the beginning of Advent I encouraged you to take a missalette into your home. The missalette has the weekend and daily readings, a great way to begin to read and reflect on scripture, the word of God in bite sized pieces. The more we read the scriptures, the easier it is to recognize God's voice. And not only do we begin to recognize God's voice, but we also begin to hear God speaking to us.

And now comes the second part of the responsorial Psalm, **'harden not your hearts.'** It is amazing the number of people who know God, recognize God's voice, and refuse God's call to mission. Here is something that might surprise you; we need each other! We need each other to witness to the word of God. We need each other to live the word of God. We need each other to be ambassadors for Christ. It is seeing others being active in ministry that inspires us to become active in God's ministry. Following on from scripture, God speaks to us through the sacraments and through sacramentals. Take time to consider if you will carry God's word to others by serving as a Eucharistic Minister, a Lector, a part of a ministry team, or helping to educate the younger generation in God's message of love and acceptance?

'If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.'

God is calling, harden not your hearts.

Have a blessed and holy week.

Fr. Martin