

Lent Devotional March 28, 2019

SCRIPTURE

John 8:21-32

²¹ Again he said to them, "I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come." ²² Then the Jews said, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" ²³ He said to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he." ²⁵ They said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Why do I speak to you at all? ²⁶ I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him." ²⁷ They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸ So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me. ²⁹ And the one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him." ³⁰ As he was saying these things, many believed in him. ³¹ Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

DEVOTIONAL

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In the United States, a free press is understood to function in society as a counterbalance to the government's inherent inclination toward the abuse of power. The inestimable value of the press is therefore tied to the veracity of its reporting. The free press is useful to its citizens, and preserving of their freedoms, insofar as it can be trusted.

In John 8:21-32 we find Jesus engaged in a heated debate with his peers concerning the truth of His identity and their general misunderstanding His ministry and mission. The Gospel of John portrays Jesus as besought and beleaguered by those who are in need of the truth but who struggle to trust His words. In today's reading, we are challenged by the crowd's question to Jesus, "Who are you?" Never has there been uttered a more important question. Who is this person called Jesus of Nazareth?

In our nation, we are at crisis point regarding people's distrust of the very news they hear on a daily basis. As Christians, we proclaim that the source of our Truth allows us to understand in His light all other truths so that we might discern and recognize what can be trusted. Jesus promised his disciples, "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." This Lent let us commit ourselves in deepening our understanding of God's Truth as it has been disclosed to us in the person of Jesus Christ. By doing so we will be better equipped to seek, uphold, and share the truth of God's love with the world.

PRAYER

Gracious God, You are the Truth that sets us free to be citizens of your kingdom. Let us, therefore, rejoice in the truth as we seek to follow your Son, who came to set all people free from the chains of ignorance and injustice. Help us to recognize our own duplicitous nature in spreading falsehoods and seeking to mislead others. Bring us into the light of your Son, that we might repent of our sins and recommit ourselves to the sharing of your Good News. Amen.