

A Spectacle or a Savior?

What have you come out to see? (Mt 9:11)

One of the most moving scenes in the Passion of Christ is the scene where Peter realizes the gravity of his betrayal and goes away weeping bitterly. However, Peter encounters Jesus' mother, Mary, and Peter falls to the ground on his knees and weeps before her. Mary tries to comfort him by touching him, but Peter feels so unworthy that he doesn't even allow her to touch him.

Touch is more than just the collision of millions and millions of molecules, the coincidental interaction of atoms. Human touch is a sign of a deeper reality, a sign of relationship. The close proximity of two people hugging or engaged in a kiss signifies the deep personal communion that underlies beneath. Yet it is still possible for us to be blind to this reality, to miss the deeper significance of touch, and the Gospel today challenges us as we reach out to our Lord:

What have you come out to see?

What is the difference between the many people in the crowd which were touching Jesus as opposed to the woman who touched the fringe of his cloak? Even the disciples were confused when Jesus asked them 'Who touched my garments?' because they said 'look at all the people who are already touching you!'

The difference between the crowd and the woman who was bleeding was that one was possibly seeking a SPECTACLE and the other was seeking a SAVIOR. The crowds were drawn to Jesus for a variety of reasons because his fame had spread throughout the land after his first exorcism, and so it is natural for human curiosity to come and see what is going on. ***They came to see a SPECTACLE.***

What have you come out to see?

The woman on the other hand came to seek a SAVIOR. She was looking for someone to give her a healing that none of the medicines could provide. The gospel says:

"She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse"

She turned with faith to the only Divine Doctor who could cure her from her ailment and was granted her request through faith: "Daughter, your faith has made you well". ***She came to see a SAVIOR and her touch was one of faith and not just of human curiosity.***

Today at the Eucharist, we are challenged to ask ourselves:

What have you come out to see?

Will we be like the crowd coming to see a SPECTACLE? Will we allow our familiarity with the Eucharist to reduce this Holy Sacrament to a mere SPECTACLE? Or will we come seeking a SAVIOR, *tired of the physicians of the world and the culture who have tried to heal us with their medicines which make us not better but worse?* We have the opportunity to touch not just the fringe of Jesus' garment ***but his very body and blood***, but **the way and manner** in which we receive him today will result in a very different result as the crowds and the woman demonstrate. And so Jesus asks you again today:

What have you come out to see?

A SPECTACLE? Or a SAVIOR?