



Reflection by Jabriel Hasan



Jabriel Hasan is a lifelong member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Richmond.

He graduated from St. Christopher's School in 2011 and from Marymount University in Arlington in 2015.

Following graduation, he served in the Peace Corps for two years as an English teacher.

Jabriel is now a part of the Urban Service Corps at Richmond Hill, working with communications and interning at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Richmond's northside while he discerns a call to the priesthood.

God has given freely to us out of God's gracious will.

In this passage, I am confronted by the idea that my social privileges won't open the gates of heaven to me. My degree, one of the social tools used to communicate my aptitude and intelligence, will not be the key to the kingdom of heaven. Christ's words make clear that my entry is not predicated on any meritocratic privilege but rather my willingness to receive God's grace as revealed to me in Christ. I can't buy into it or work for it, because I was born into it.

My first task, then, is to be open to the grace of recognizing that I am already in the Kingdom of God. Then, the question is not "Is God present to me?" Rather, the question is, "Am I present to God?" The question is not "Is God's grace available to me?" The question is, "Am I available to God's grace?" I wonder if I have any other option but to be open to receiving it, because the ultimate question is really, "Do I want to accept to the riches of eternal life in Christ, or do I want to die clinging to this world?" Because I profess my calling to follow Christ, I know my answer.

Yet, I know that to follow is not only to profess, but also to bear witness with the life I lead. At Pentecost, Christ's body became my own, so I am called to be like Christ. When Christ tells me, "Come unto me..." he is telling me to come unto myself, to enter into the divinity in my humanity. The divinity in my humanity is pure empathy. What I do unto others, I have already done unto myself. The veil of separation between the other and myself is so thin in the Kingdom of God that, for better or worse, what I have given I cannot help but receive.

When put into perspective, it is nothing but God's unfailing grace and mercy that I continue to receive the gift of life every day. I am graced with chance after chance to become more like Christ. What a joy it is to recognize this gift. I am by, with, and in God, and if God is infinite love, then I can't help but share that love with others.

Surely, there's more than enough to go around.

Feast of St. Francis |
Matthew 11:25-30



Reflection Questions

- How do you make yourself present to God?
- How are you available to God's grace?
- What stories personal stories do you have about encountering grace and encountering God?

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