

A Quiet Place

The shopping cart, filled with groceries, careened into the green Subaru Outback.

A few yards away, a young mom lay on the parking lot pavement, sobbing. She had slipped on the black ice last Tuesday morning. Her daughter, a toddler, was screaming at the top of her lungs.

As mom was being helped to her feet, she realized that she had left her keys at the cashier. Between her sobs, she kept repeating: "It's just too much. It's just too much. On top of everything, it's just too much!"

We've all had moments like that: Moments when it all feels like "too much." And not just moments-Sometimes they are days, weeks, months...

We may even feel like Job in today's First Reading . We wonder: "When will I see happiness again?"

Our faith holds that Jesus was "a man like us in all things but sin." That means that he felt what we feel.

Everything.

So Jesus had to know the feeling of being overwhelmed. Today's gospel might be one of those "moments."

People are sick and in distress. Everyone seems to need something. Even Peter's mother-in-law has a fever. (Mark 1:29-39)

In the midst of the whirlwind notice what Jesus does: " He went off to a (quiet) deserted place... a place to pray." And then, having returned from that "quiet place" he resolutely faces the needs that are ahead.

Like Jesus, we all have to find our "quiet place."

It can be in a church. It can be a corner of our home. It can be outside under a vast blue sky. But like Jesus, we all have to find that place.

-A quiet place to clear the noise and clutter in our heads;

-A quiet place to ask, "What should I say yes to? What must I say *no* to?"

-A quiet place to figure out: where I'm going with my life?

-A quiet place to ask what must I forgive ? To whom must I ask forgiveness?

-A quiet place to just have a good, long cry;

-A quiet place to pray for strength from within;

-A quiet place to breathe in some peace.

We all need a place: whether we've slipped on black ice, juggling everyone's needs or resetting our life's compass.

"The quieter you become. The more you hear."

You may hear more of what's going on around you. More importantly you hear what's going on inside you.

Don't delay in finding your quiet place, even if the hurry of the world allows for only brief visits. Strive for longer ones.

That holy space can fortify and heal, even on days when it feels like everything "is just too much."

Father Steven Labaire