



SAY TO THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE FRIGHTENED, "BE STRONG! FEAR NOT!"

IN THE GOSPEL, JESUS PROCLAIMS: "EPHPHATAHA! BE OPENED!"

THIS COMMAND IS REPEATED AT EVERY BAPTISM.

And surely he intends that our senses be opened to beauty.

I have just returned from Alaska and Denali National Park.

The tundra there was arrayed in scarlet and gold.

And grazing among its grasses and berry bushes wer several Grizzlies resplendent in their honey brown fur.

Vacation mens to vacate. Part of what we vacate is so much of the bad news that assaults us from every direction. There has always been bad news, but now, different from our ancestors, we are aware of it from every corner of the world.

So the stock market plunged! So what? The world keeps turning and from our window into beauty, we never noticed.

The bad news can envelop us in fear, so today's First Reading from Isaiah is pertinent:

"Thus says the Lord: Say to those whose hearts are frightened, "Be strong! Fear not! Here is your God..."

We all need immersion into beauty, whether it is our garden, a city park, or Educational TV's nature shows.

It is always there to behold no matter where we live.

"Be opened!" says Jesus.

On our journey, part of the way we had commentary from Park Rangers which was very helpful. They reminded us that we are the caretakers of a diminishing resource: the wilderness. On our journey through Denali, we left no trash. and barely footprints.

They echoed the pleas of Pope Francis to care for our home, the earth.

LABOR DAY, SEPT. 7, 2015

EXCERPT FROM SIMONE CAMPBELL, ncr

Our CATHOLIC FATH teaches us that addressing inequality must include just wages and working conditions for those in the labor force. As long ago as 1891, Pope Leo XIII affirmed the right of workers to form association or unions to seek justice and fair wages. In 1981, Pope John Paul II asserted "The fundamental "priority of labor over capital" and called for "new movements of solidarity of the workers" And more recently, Pope Francis called on the faithful to "to fight for social benefits, a dignified retirement, holidays, and rest,..."

Sadly too many Catholics do not know their history: how unions saved children from child labor and freed workers from virtual serfdom.

Scott Walker, Catholic Governor from Wisconsin is basing his campaign on his success in diminishing unions.

And so we pray:

O God, may our senses be opened to beauty all around.

On this Labor Day Weekend,

lead us beyond just shopping and sales,

to reflect on where our "goods" originate:

from the callused hands of farm workers,

23rd Sunday, Ordinary Time/ LABOR DAY

Written by Fr. Fitz

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the sweating brows of factory workers.

Help us to have insight

into the need for social justice.

Deliver us from propaganda

that belittles labor,

and glorifies greed.

Amen