Daily Reflection – Monday, March 4, 2013

Humility and obedience – two lessons that today’s scripture readings speak to us about which are particularly helpful as we move through the Lenten season.

In today’s readings, we hear the story of Naaman, an army commander from a foreign land who traveled to Israel to be cured of his sickness and of Elijah who cured a widow from the town of Sidonia and not those in his own land. In the case of Naaman, he expected that he would be cured of his sickness in an extraordinary and dramatic event and not in a simple act of washing in the Jordan. Only in his ultimate obedience was Naaman cured. In the case of Elijah, many were enraged that he did not cure those in Israel, as if they should have received special entitlement but rather, Elijah cured the suffering of a widow from a foreign village.

To me, what both readings speak to is that in humility and obedience, we will more fully understand God and make ourselves open and available to God’s grace. For me, I oftentimes get caught up in my image of what God is, of the ritual and pageantry of our faith – in many ways not that different from Namaan. While I have faith, sometimes I have a certain expectation of exactly what that means, rather than a simple obedience to listen to what God is asking me to do. While ritual and pageantry play an important part in our faith life, the readings today tell us to be humble, not to ignore the simple commands that were given to Naaman and to challenge our preconceived notions.

The Scriptures tell us that only in our own humility and in obedience to God, will we understand Jesus more and genuinely resolve to make ourselves more available to him in this Lenten season.

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