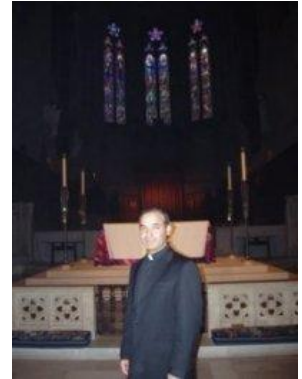


Reflections by Father John Nahal

1. 2 Timothy 3:14

But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it.

Loving God, your gift of faith is precious to me. Grant me the grace to live my life in such a way that others may recognize Jesus in me.



2. 2 Corinthians 13:8

For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

This passage is part of a longer piece in which St. Paul admonishes the early community at Corinth to seek the Christ who is in them. Knowledge of Christ will be their strength to avoid evil and to give witness to their faith. The heart of one who is convinced of God's love for him or her will seek good and truth. Following the commandments is our response to what we are convinced of in our heart of hearts—God's love for us and salvation through Christ Jesus.

3. John 6:45

Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me.

Listen. Learn. Come. In one short sentence, Jesus sums up the movement of a life of faith. When we stop talking and listen to another, there are so many things to learn. And when we listen and learn from another, we are drawn closer together. How much more so with God! Listening to God and learning from God leads us to Jesus. It is through Jesus that we come to know the Father. It's a dynamic movement of love between Father and Son. When we open ourselves to God's voice, we place ourselves within that dynamic movement of love. We come closer and closer to Jesus.

4. 1 Peter 5:6-7

So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you.

In the Scripture, to be humble means to recognize the true relationship between God and ourselves. We have been created by God. When we come to appreciate that God is our creator and that he cares for us, the appropriate response is one of humility. It is only through humility that we are capable of praising God. We bow humbly before God our Father, knowing that our relationship with him is one of intimacy. God cares for us and wants us to turn to him with all of our cares.

5. James 2:26

For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

The journey of faith is not just a “me and God” experience. The Holy Spirit works through the Church to lead us to build a world of peace and justice. God made us for lives in community. The contemporary value of individualism, in which one is concerned only with his or her personal experience, can lead to a dead end. Seeking justice is a way of living that makes us vulnerable, because it means that we trust God and not simply our own desires. What we do, or refrain from doing, reveals who we are as followers of God.

Lord Jesus Christ, in this place and at this time, I am your hands, feet, ears, eyes, and heart. Lead me to work for justice where I live and in the world around me.

6. Acts of the Apostles 2:38

Repent and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit.

Merciful God, thank you for calling me into your family. May your Holy Spirit be with me as I learn to be a faithful follower of your son, Jesus.

7. Mark 1:29-31

On leaving the synagogue he entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon’s mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

Jesus walks through the door, and he is ...told about the woman’s illness. Simon and Andrew believed that Jesus could help. His compassionate presence and the healing touch of his hand cure her. She responds by rising and offering hospitality to Jesus and the other guests. Illness isolates; healing restores. Who has not felt his or her spirits lifted during a time of illness by the presence of a friend or relative? A word or a touch can be enough to change our attitude from sadness and despair to hope and happiness. We all are called to be healers for one another.

8. Luke 1:46-47

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

Filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, Mary bursts into a song of praise during her visit with her cousin Elizabeth. Both women know of God’s wonders. Elizabeth, pregnant with John the Baptist, praises Mary for her devotion ...to God, calling her blessed. Mary offers praise for God’s love of those most in need. Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, shows us what it means to trust and love God. She was the first to accept Jesus into her life and remains a model for us today.