



A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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*This is why I speak to them in parables,
Because they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand (Mt 11:13)*

In my younger days, I wanted to be an astronomer. I loved the natural world, and this seemed like a suitable calling. In college, I discovered that the math was too much. I could appreciate it, but I could not understand the world through math. As I ended up in the humanities and social work, I was relieved to find out that people aren't math problems. So, they and their questions shouldn't be treated as such.

Jesus understood this. As a carpenter, of course, he had to understand math. His craft was based in measurements, precision, and accuracy. But as a Jewish healer and teacher, he understood that people are imprecise. When people came to Jesus with questions about God, life, and suffering, he rarely gave a precise answer. Instead, he told open-ended stories and parables.

The reason is simple. A well-told story draws us in and helps us think differently about ourselves, God, and our world. This is because stories evoke memories and emotions. A good story contains an echo of our souls and possesses the energy to provoke, enlighten, and move us in countless ways. Jesus was God's own story to us, and God invited us into the divine story by dwelling among us. And God did this while we still were questioning, unsure, and full of doubt, anxiety, and wounds.

Like Jesus, we don't get to pick and choose who is worthy or unworthy of accompaniment. We simply must open our eyes to what is really going on around us and ask for God's wisdom for how to respond. Then, when someone approaches us, we can understand them and their questions, not as math problems to be solved. Rather, we understand them as complex stories from whom to learn and with whom we together can craft a new story, a reconciled story.

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This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org