



A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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“They will seize and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony.” — Luke 21: 12-13

Today’s Gospel reading is tough to hear. To buck up our courage, it’s probably best to read the last sentence first (“not a hair on your head will be destroyed”) and remind ourselves that Jesus promised to always walk with us.

What is this testimony that we will give? If we read today’s scripture in light of last Sunday’s Gospel (Matthew 25:31-46, “The Judgment of the Nations.”), we must conclude that the witness we will give is caring for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill and the imprisoned. Our witness is to stand with those who have no standing. For that witness, Jesus tells us today, we will be hauled before the kings and governors to be persecuted and even — for some of us — put to death.

That is a great Christian conundrum: Choosing to follow Jesus leads us to death, but choosing that death leads us to life.

This Gospel lesson, Pope Francis has said, asks us to consider the choices we make.

“Life ... is a time for making robust, decisive, eternal choices. Trivial choices lead to a trivial life; great choices to a life of greatness. Indeed, we become what we choose, for better or for worse. If we choose to steal, we become thieves. If we choose to think of ourselves, we become self-centered. If we choose to hate, we become angry. ... Yet if we choose God, daily we grow in his love, and if we choose to love others, we find true happiness. ... if we are self-absorbed and indifferent, we remain paralyzed, but if we give ourselves to others, we become free. The Lord of life wants us to be full of life, and he tells us the secret of life: we come to possess it only by giving it away. This is a rule of life: we come to possess life, now and in eternity, only by giving it away.”

Today's reading from Daniel teaches very much the same lesson. Think of the gold and silver vessels stolen from the temple in Jerusalem as gifts God has given us to do God's work in this world. King Belshazzar chooses not to use the vessels as God intended; he and his entourage choose to abuse the gifts.

Today, what testimony will we give? Today, what choices will we make?

Dennis Coday has done communication and marketing work for [Precious Blood Renewal Center](#) in Liberty, Missouri, since 2019 but his family ties to the Precious Blood extend farther back in history. He attended Precious Blood Seminary High School and college formation at Rockhurst University. His brother Fr. Timothy Coday has served in Tanzania for more than 35 years.

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