Mercy Beyond Borders:

*CCOP Encounters The Redeemer*

January 7th, 2016
Table Of Contents

I. Gathering Hymn
II. Opening Prayer
III. Introductory Remarks
  • Comments On The Year of Mercy
  • Why Mercy Beyond Borders
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy : Exodus: 34: 5-9
  • I’m Back...
  • The White Elephant Stomps Around the Room
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders
  • Mercy Is On The Border
  • Mercy As Essential To God
  • Back To Exodus 34
I. Gathering Hymn

Hold Us In Your Mercy
(see song sheet)
II. Opening Prayer

The Lord came down in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name “LORD.” So the Lord passed before him and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, continuing his love for a thousand generations and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless... Moses at once knelt and bowed down to the ground. Then he said, “If I find favor with you Lord come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins and claim us as your own.”
III. Introductory Remarks

Comments on the Year of Mercy

• Jubilee Year – Every 25 years since 1300!!!
• Francis called the year in May 2015.
• Jesus "The Living Face of the Mercy of the Father."

"Hearing the word mercy changes everything. It is the best thing we can hear: It changes the world. A bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just."

– Francis
III. Introductory Remarks

Why “Mercy Beyond Borders?”

• Basis for mercy is often self-centered. The borders according to...
• Offering mercy is based upon one set of values; receiving mercy is another!!!

"I think we too are the people who, on the one hand, want to listen to Jesus, but on the other hand, at times, like to find a stick to beat others with, to condemn others. And Jesus has this message for us: mercy. I think — and I say it with humility — that this is the Lord's most powerful message: mercy."

— Francis
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy - Exodus: 34: 5-9

The Lord came down in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name “LORD.” So the Lord passed before him and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, continuing his love for a thousand generations and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless... Moses at once knelt and bowed down to the ground. Then he said, “If I find favor with you Lord come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins and claim us as your own.”
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy -
Exodus: 34: 5-9

I’m Back...

What’s (Not So) New?

- *The Lord came down in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name “LORD.” 34:5*
  - Not new? The name Lord in the plural (Adonai)
  - Not new? NEVER to be taken in vain
  - New? Theophany – appearances
  - New? The burning bush – self-sustaining God
  - New? God’s descent on Sinai/People on the plain - distance
  - New? .....
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy - Exodus: 34: 5-9

I’m Back...

Khesed – Loving Kindness

• So the Lord passed before him and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, 34:6
  o It’s a covenantal word … not random.
  o It’s a restorative word… strengthens the bond; not a fix-it.
  o It’s expressive… used as an epitaph of sorts.
  o It’s a just word… It ain’t hallmark!
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy - Exodus: 34: 5-9

I’m Back...

BUT!!!!

• continuing his love for a thousand generations and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless... 34:7
  o Kadesh is not simply a momentary Theophany
  o v’ nakeh lo y’nakeh
  o Who cleanses (v’nakeh) God offers loving kindness
  o No repentance (y’nakeh) God does not cleanse
  o Biblical grammar and midrash
IV. A Starting Point for Judeo-Christian Mercy - Exodus: 34: 5-9

The White Elephant Stomps Around the Room

- Which comes first Mercy or Justice?
  - Precedence over the rule of mercy over justice
  - Repentance is essential
- Is this the Wrong Question?
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders

Mercy Is On The Border

- Mercy is given very little attention – Dogmatically and Doctrinally
- Issue: Classical concepts of God grounded in metaphysical categories

“Such a God appears to them to have little or nothing to do with the situation of the world in which almost daily horrible news reports come, one after the other, and many people are deeply troubled by anxieties of the future.”

- Walter Kasper
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders

Mercy As Essential To God?

- Back to the White Elephant Stomping around the room
  - Love is essential to the nature of God (Father, Son and Spirit)
  - Justice is essential to the nature of God (Father, Son and Spirit)
  - But Mercy (Burning Bush and Distant God from the muck on the plains)
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders

Mercy As Essential To God?

- Mercy as Embodied Love
  - Is it the dogmatic question or the relational one – a bodily one!!!
  - To try to prioritize justice over mercy is not helpful...
  - Love according to the hierarchy of God’s nature, precedes justice
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders

Back To Exodus 34

- I’m Back... New Intimacy

Moses at once knelt and bowed down to the ground. Then he said, “If I find favor with you Lord come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins and claim us as your own. 34: 8-9.

  - Repentant and in Need of Repentance
  - Accompaniment and intimacy is the horizon of Mercy
V. Locating Mercy’s Borders

Next Week

• Jesus calls us to walk with Him as God accompanied Moses who appears as Mercy.
• Jesus Lives Mercy with a call to Repentance.
• The Crucified One is the heart of Mercy.
• The Crucified One is the heart of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton.
• Jesus reveals the Father’s response of Mercy when we are wronged or there is injustice.