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by Pat Marrin

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Pencil Preacher began almost six years ago as part of the Celebration website. The premise was that the first encounter with the Word has its own special feel. Before the analysis, the exegesis and the hermeneutic kick in, meeting Jesus in the Word is like meeting a friend early in the morning over coffee. It is a conversation marked by spontaneity and affection. What's the Good News here? What is fresh and new about these familiar readings in the daily Lectionary assigned to the Masses being

celebrated all over the world that day? We encounter God together with the global communities of the faithful gathering to pray. Like daily bread, the Word is fresh out of the oven, baked especially for today to nourish us for the tasks and challenges that will meet us when we engage today..

Pencil Preaching is exploratory and tentative, maybe unorthodox at times as the imagination leads and the metaphors flow. It's OK, because this is just a first draft, open-ended and unfinished. Later it may become Ink Preaching or Published Preaching, corrected to make sure it will pass muster. My goal is to speak heart to heart, to encourage others in our common faith, ask obvious questions, apply the Word to the real world so the Bible talks to the newspaper and the morning news. There is no pulpit here, just one person thinking out loud, something anyone can do, and I encourage you to do your own first draft reflection on the daily readings. They will address each of us differently, so listen to your own thoughts and trust that the Good News is looking for you personally. The small drawings are my own, part of the process of imagining the biblical stories and images.

My first official post will appear tomorrow, Saturday, June 8, with some thoughts about Pentecost, June 9. After that, each post will appear a day ahead, six times a week, Sunday through Friday, with Saturdays off. Because Celebration magazine is closing down after 48 years, this blog will only appear on the NCR site and no longer on the Celebration Facebook page. I will try to keep my reflections at around 400 words to make them easy and manageable for us both.

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