Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matt 16:24).

Nah 2:1,3; 3;1, 3,6-7; Matt 16:24-28

Jesus reveals the great paradox of discipleship in today’s gospel passage about finding and losing ourselves. He had just told his Apostles that he is on his way to Jerusalem to complete his mission, but not in the way they expect. He will be rejected and killed, but from that self-sacrifice will usher in the life of glory that will be their destiny if they are willing to follow him.

Our willingness to lose ourselves for the sake of Jesus and in service of others is not a single act but a lifelong process. We discover that when we empty ourselves for the sake of the community we actually find and fulfill ourselves. Or we learn that when we pull back to protect our interests, we end up isolated and incomplete. We set out to find love, only to realize that when we give it away, it comes back to us multiplied and in ways we could not have imagined. Or we learn that pursuing approval and love for our own satisfaction only drives others away.

At the end of today’s gospel, Jesus alludes to the mountaintop transfiguration he and select witnesses are about to experience enroute to Jerusalem. Peter, James and John will see the messianic glory Jesus is to reveal by his surrender on the cross, which will fulfill the Law and the Prophets. God’s mercy is about to be poured out on a sinful world in a stunning act of divine self-emptying love. This is the pattern every disciple is invited to imitate. Each time we lose ourselves for others we will find ourselves in the company of Jesus.

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