Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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August 30, 2022
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“At sunset, all who had people sick with various diseases brought them to him” (Luke 4:40).

1 Cor 3:1-9; *Luke 4:38-44*

Luke gives us in a single sentence a rich scene to describe Jesus as healer. It is sunset, the time before darkness descends on the sick, the start of the long, lonely hours of suffering and need they endure while waiting for dawn. People have brought their sick to Jesus confident in his power to comfort and heal. He will turn sunset into sunrise for them because of his own journey into the dark night of death, ushering in the new dawn of the resurrection. His coming sacrifice already has the effect of lifting up those who live in the shadow of affliction.

The Incarnation means that Jesus’ body is already full of grace. He is the sign and sacrament of the new creation, what a complete human being was meant to be before sin marred the original image of God. Those who touch him or are touched by him receive a foretaste of the promised redemption, a glimpse of our human future.

But it comes with a cost, for every disease or burden lifted from them falls on Jesus, who will carry the sins of the world and the consequences of evil to death on the cross. By the end of his brief ministry, Jesus will, in St. Paul’s astonishing words, “become sin, who knew no sin, so that we might become the grace of God” (2 Cor 5:21). His innocence will carry the weight of the old creation across the threshold of death, freeing us to receive God’s mercy.

To be saved is an astonishing thing, but even more wondrous is that God saves us in our broken flesh. Jesus embraces our human journey and knows the struggle of our fears, pain, the weight of disease and aging, the lonely nights and the challenge of faith when all the evidence seems against hope. In Jesus, God is with us every step of the way. This is the joy of the Gospel.

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