

## **Mortal, Can These Bones Live?**

May 20, 2018 – Pentecost Sunday

Mortal, can these bones live? They are dry from the deprivation of quiet reflection, vibrant imagination, the work of prayer, and the nourishment of love and simple human community.

Mortal can these bones, live? They have been stripped of their life and muscle and limber from the endless stream of news and images and external stimuli. The news is of children dying in Texas and Palestine. The images are of heartbroken parents mourning the sudden loss of their children to war and violence. The external stimuli is that of texts and tweets, insults and threats spat out from the high places of rule and power.

Mortal, can these bones live? The financial markets soar higher while the threat of gun violence, deportation, and discrimination grows more and more. The meek run for cover while the powerful thunder from their places of power. Here we are again in the age of leaders positioning themselves for tactical advantage driving nation to rise against nation.

Mortal can these bones live? Our cultural morality is topsy-turvy. Greed is good, being Muslim is not. Fame and fortune, excess and luxury is glorified, while social services and public education is defunded. There is religious outcry when two persons who are gay give themselves to the mutual commitment and fidelity of marriage but these same defenders of the sanctity of marriage hold no compassion for families ripped apart by immigration agents commissioned by the executive branch of our country.

Mortal can these bones live? The years have taken their toll; the children have grown up, the marriage has grown cold, the job no longer satisfies, illness and disease have taken up residency in body and soul. Life has been spent but life is no longer giving back. I am dry, I am weak, I am tired, I am afraid. I am alone. I am broken. I am addicted. I am abandoned. I am in that valley of dry bones.

Speak to me Lord, with words of wisdom and inspiration. Sing to me Lord the songs of revival and joy. Breathe in me the spirit of life and innovation and imagination and courage and vitality. Dress these bones with flesh and life of human compassion and community. Rescue me from the great dehumanization and segregation of our times. Instead of fear, fill me with the courage to defend those who are most vulnerable. Raise us from being a valley of dry bones and make us a sanctuary of compassionate hearts.

Make me Lord, as you did with your servant Francis of Assisi: To be an instrument of peace in this time of conflict and violence, to nurture community in the age of autonomy and polarization, to listen long and speak kindly in this age of rants and defamation.

The spirit came at Pentecost to break the barriers that separate language and culture. The spirit at Pentecost transformed frightened believers into courageous healers. The

Spirit came at Pentecost to empower the weak and bring down the haughty. The spirit came at Pentecost to impassion the followers of Jesus to become the story changers of their world. They changed the world in which they lived and we are here to do the same in our own time.

Pentecost comes as a time to be renewed - revived - redirected - reimagined. Our lives inevitably come to the dry places, the awry places, the "where do I go from here" places. These are the times when we need a breath from God - we need our own Pentecost. God will lift us from the ruts and graves we have allowed ourselves to be buried in. God will break the chains we have let ourselves be bound by. God will free the soul from the prisons we have locked ourselves in to. God will illumine the mind we have ceased to imagine with. God will raise the voice we have failed to speak out with.

This is Pentecost – the power and spirit of God being poured out upon the children of the earth.

Mortal can these bones live? Yes Lord, they shall live!

Amen