

Are You Trustworthy?

Genesis 9:8- 17

The past Tuesday was 'Fat Tuesday' followed by Ash Wednesday, and today we come to the first Sunday of Lent. Because it's fun to 'mess' with other people's business, in a positive manner, of course, my question is, "Did you have you own Mardi Gras or Shrove Tuesday? Did you 'pork out' on sausage or pig out on pancakes? Have you decided what to give up for Lent? And, why are you doing that?"

The word Lent originated from the old English, and means, 'to lengthen.' It was used to remind our forbearers in faith that, not only was Spring coming, but it would overwhelm death's icy grip. As we consider Spring's new creations, we are reminded our joy, life, death, resurrection, and our relationship with the God of Love who made it all for us.

This Lent we will look at what one author calls, "The Five Dysfunctions of the Church." Number one, the first one that occurs in our relationships, is a lack of trust.

As you may know, the Book of Genesis starts with Creation and follows with the bestowing on Eve and Adam, the capacity to make right or wrong choices. And, we know the results of their choosing. Commanding the two not to eat off the tree begs the question, 'why would God not want them to eat this fruit? Is God hiding something?'

What are the realities of our lives when we start to mistrust those around us? Do we think they are hiding something from us? Why do we begin to question their motives? When this happens, we start losing our vulnerability, because mistrust has entered the arena and like Adam and Eve, we feel the need take control.

Mistrust is insidious. It enters all relationships even the one with God. In the fourth chapter of Genesis, God gives Cain a warning that sin is crouching at the door of his heart. Because he no longer trusts God he does not ask for assistance, so personally taking control, he kills his brother, the first murder in Holy Scriptures.

Murder so soon! And by the sixth chapter sin and evil develop so rapidly, that a Godly intervention is needed. Enter Noah and his crash course in ark building. Noah was obedient, and a sanctuary was created. Following the flood, God made a covenant, a contractual promise, with humanity and the animals.

This agreement contained terms that may be seen in chapter nine verses 1-8. Please note: The couple was prohibited from the use birth control! God loves diversity and numbers! Then they were told that the animal kingdom would fear them because they had become today's blue plate special. With one exception: they could not eat the blood of the animals. God will demand an accounting for the murder of a human by another human. So here is God's covenant with Noah, and by extension with us, sealed with a rainbow.

When trust is broken how do we rebuild it? Someone has to take the first step, to be willing to become vulnerable. As I say, 'God is a God of new beginning.'

Is there someone you need to re-establish trust? Are there agreements, boundaries, that need to be put in place when you start the rebuilding process? Are you willing to follow the example of Jesus and follow God?

Are you ready to welcome God to your life and respond to wherever God leads you? Welcome to Lent! Alleluia. Amen.