

## *Christ Our Hope Catholic Church*

### *Faith in Laity Corner*



*Monday, January 28th, 2019*

*Reading Neh. 8:2-4, 5-6, 8-10; Lk.4:14-21*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Times*

## Leaders Of Hope

Over thousands of years through the eyes on humanity, we can say that our varied collective experiences have affected us all. This week's Readings forces a realization that those who accept the role of leadership have a charge to provide some measure of hope. As we recalled, with every great leader, there is always the need to move along people with a sense of hope.

At the dawn of creation, God left Adam and Eve with the hope that someday things will revert to the Paradise which was lost. God relayed to Abraham the hope for a son that provided him an inheritance, *and off-springs as many as the stars*. Moses provided hope for the Chosen People to reach a Promised Land, freed from slavery. Isaiah, provided the foretelling hope of a Messiah, soon to come. Jesus came to give us hope for eternal life. Christopher Columbus whose name will always be remembered, (even if we did not consider his voyages a positive event) sold the hope of finding a new way to reach the Far East. Leaders like Dr. King, Jr. held to the hope of a fair and civil world for everyone. The late Nelson Mandela would leave a 27-year prison sentence and brought hope to a country in turmoil.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me.” (Lk. 4:18)*

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How does a leader provide hope for his/her people? A person of authority received from the law, whether it civil or spiritual, but all are governed by God'.

*“Ezra blessed the LORD. the great God.” (Neh.8:6)*

Each leader would understand their authority as coming from the God, rather than by their own power. Ezra clearly, as a prophet, knew that the source of his power was through God’s mercy.

*“Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly.” (Neh. 8:2)*

When the leader is appointed, he/she can stand face the community and read the law without fear.

*“Ezra read out of the book.” (Neh. 8:3)*

The law gives the leader his/her authority to pronounce words before God and the people, with clarity, deliberation and power.

*“Ezra opened the scroll so that*

*all the people might see it,” (Neh. 8:8)*

When a leader honestly interprets the law it resonates with the people, who in turn will heed with their ears and hearts.

*“The people listened attentively to the book of the law.” (Neh. 8:3)*

When the law is pronounced with love, authority and power, the leader reaches the heart of the people, and they are moved to act. A true leader can stand before the people and pronounced the law and can accept the scrutiny of the people.

*“He stood up to read and was handed*

*a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.” (Lk. 4:16-17)*

Leaders, as Jesus can accept and enter the prayer and lamenting of the people, sensitive to their needs. Yet, know to bring hope to those who are pure of heart, to those in pain, to those despairing, and to those who are just waiting.

*“Today is holy to the LORD your God.*

*Do not lament, do not weep!” (Neh. 8:9)*

Just as Ezra brought the word of the law to people of his time. Jesus proclaimed the new law and gave us hope. With that wish at heart, there is no need to go about in despair but remain in the joy of the moment to return to living in joyful hope.

*“Go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks...” (Neh 8:10)*

When led by a leader who is guided by God’s Spirit, his/her approach will be for the good of the people. Leadership requires strength and honesty, but with the ability for the people to question the heart of the law and receive the blessings and honesty of their leader.

*Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing  
in the LORD is your strength!” (Neh. 8:10)*

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***We thank God for our leaders who have ended the federal shutdown. Let us pray for those who struggle to reach a level of normalcy.***

Written by Brenda Chee Wah, a lay parishioner of Christ Our Hope Catholic Church Lithonia, Georgia. Available now on webpage/Facebook

<http://www.christourhopeatl.org/becoming-a-catholic/christ-our-hope-catholic-church-weekly-reflections.php>

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Scriptures: [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

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