

August 14, 2016

When I read the press release from the diocese late Friday afternoon, I was stunned and felt like I had been punched in the stomach. When I read the article in the next morning's paper with details, I was heartsick. And I quickly discovered that I was not alone. I know that there is heartache, dismay and anguish throughout Presentation parish over what has happened. The question that immediately came to my mind was "What should we do in light of this situation that now confronts us?"

What should we do? Well, for starters I encourage all of us to take to heart one verse in the Book of the Prophet Micah. He had been sent to the Kingdom of Judah 500 to 600 years before the time of Jesus to speak a word of judgment against the people for their sins and especially against the leaders for their lack of faithfulness. It was a time of imminent catastrophe at the hands of the Babylonians who were about to or had already conquered them. Micah's word of judgment was harsh, but it was followed by a word of hope, the promise of a salvation that would come. But then he said this, which we should take to heart today: "As for me, I will look to the Lord, I will put my trust in God my savior; my God will hear me!" (Micah 7:7) Surely He will hear our cries.

What should we do? We should stand together and be the Church. We've heard it before, I know, but this is the moment to take it to heart and be what it suggests. When St. Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he reminded them who they were: "You are the Body of Christ, and every one of you is a member of the Body of Christ." It is important to know what he was saying, because it does not come across in the English translation. He was writing in Greek and the words for body and member had stupendous implications for the Corinthians and for us. He was not talking about images or metaphors for the institutional structure of the Church. He was talking about being the physical body of Christ in the gatherings and every person being a member of that physical body as in hands, feet, arms, legs, etc. And he made it clear that each one is absolutely essential and that all must work together for the full functioning of the body.

So, what should we do? We should stand together and be that Body of Christ and act accordingly. If we do that, nothing will be able to stop us or overcome us. After all, we have the promise of Jesus: I will be with you until the end of time. (Matthew 28:20)

Deacon Bill Brennan