



Listening, Praying & Discerning

Week 4 – Prayer of the Unlikely Choice

“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.” (Luke 2:8-9 NRSV)

The Bible is full of unlikely choices – people who, in their frailty, nonetheless become star players in God’s narrative of life. This is true of the Old Testament matriarchs and patriarchs. It is also true of those who first welcomed Jesus into their lives in the gospel narratives, like the shepherds in our gospel story. These are the outcast, the poor and the marginalized.¹ How do we receive this news? How do we understand the message that Jesus first becomes known to those who are among the least of these (or those whose lives are complicated enough that they are unlikely choices in God’s story)?

While it is true that we are called to act for equity for all, there is a step that precedes this work. This is the step of recognition that we are all, each of us, unlikely choices. Each of us harbours within ourselves a type of marginalization. These are our fears and vulnerabilities, our anxieties and our sense of not being enough in one fashion or another. To work toward equity for all involves stepping into our personal status as an “unlikely choice.” Because without this step, our equity work comes out of our top-down status, perpetuating the inequities we seek to undo. As we welcome the poor into our lives and listen for the wisdom that has been bestowed upon them, we do so from the deep knowledge we too are unlikely, unfinished creations, nonetheless chosen to participate in the grand narrative of God’s creation. This is surprising news perhaps, but it is also good news. There is space in the story for each one of us.

Try to spend anywhere from 2 – 20 minutes per day in intentional silence. *Come close to your status as an “unlikely choice” – both personally and congregationally. Rest in the knowledge that God has a place for you in the larger narrative of life. Breathe into this. Listen for what this means for you spiritually and practically.*

(Note: For a prayer app to support your time of prayer, please see: <https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app>)

¹ For more on this, please see Brian McLaren, *We Make the Road by Walking* (Chapter 17).



credenceandco.com

50 Ottawa Street S., Suite 346, Kitchener, ON N2G 3S7
519.883.8906 • info@credenceandco.com