

REFLECTION: I remember a time I found a treasure, and it helped me change my ways...
I remember... I remember...

OUR FATHER
Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
R. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

SIGN OF PEACE
Jesus, you said to your apostles: “I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**”

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
R. And with your spirit.

LAMB OF GOD
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **Have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **Have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **Grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to his supper.
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION

CLOSING PRAYER
Let us pray:
Lord God,
You appeared to Solomon and offered to give him anything he asked for and he chose a wise heart. Give us the courage to make the right choices in life. Help us to put our trust and joy not in perishable things but in your Son, his Good News and the kingdom he came to build among us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



What do You Treasure the Most?

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

I remember when I was a few years into my L.W.O.P. (life without parole) sentence. I built devices people could use for drug use. I charged others small portions of drugs for the use of my equipment. My desire to use drugs would sometimes outweigh my greed to make money. I remember confiding in my Mom. I told her drugs had a power over me that I had problem controlling. She would tell me, “Brian, tell yourself, from this day forward, you will never use again. Mean this, feel this in your heart, and keep telling yourself this until it is telling you it is true.” This worked for a while but eventually, excuses for using would creep back into my weak mind and I would binge. I remember feeling worse than a failure. I would call my Mom and explain to her my moment of weakness.

Since that time, I’ve encountered countless circumstances where drugs were offered for free, and were even pushed on me. But I’m done. There is nothing left in me that believes any type of ‘high’ is okay. I stopped use of all drugs because I don’t like who I became when I first allowed myself to begin using. I don’t need to mask not feeling whole by getting high. I build my wholeness by repairing my life. Yes, I am in prison. Yes, I am here due to my own actions. Yes, I would choose freedom if it were my choice to make. But it isn’t, so what freedom can I choose for myself while in prison? I have the choice to become a better person – a person I would have looked up to and listened to when I lacked direction I recognized. Experiencing self-worth can be obtained mostly anywhere I’ve been because it begins as a thought.

- Brian, who is in a California state prison.



Art by T. Larimer

PENITENTIAL RITE
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.
R. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER
Let us pray:
Loving God,
You shower us with so many blessings and guide our lives in so many ways. Help us to be mindful always of the many gifts that you give us and inspire us to use these gifts to bring your love to others.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
R. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "O LORD, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David; but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?" The LORD was pleased that Solomon made this request. So God said to him: "Because you have asked for this— not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right— I do as you requested. I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you."

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Romans 8:28-30

Brothers and sisters: We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-66, 127-128

R. Lord, I love your commands.
I have said, O LORD, that my part is to keep your words.
The law of your mouth is to me more precious than thousands of gold and silver pieces.
R. Lord, I love your commands.
Let your kindness comfort me according to your promise to your servants.
Let your compassion come to me that I may live,
for your law is my delight.
R. Lord, I love your commands.
For I love your commands more than gold, however fine.
For in all your precepts I go forward;
every false way I hate.
R. Lord, I love your commands.

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. "Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."

The Gospel of the Lord.
R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION: HOW TO BE CLOSER TO GOD

<i>(from the eyes of a disciple)</i>	you can heal the sick the intensity of abel was so noticeable clearly he was used to getting what he wanted in life even now having two servants with him it was clear that all his needs were attended to	as abel jonathan show abel the marks on your arms that you received from the romans when you were imprisoned abel looking at scars from torn up skin	this thought was too much jesus i'm sorry but i can't let go of my lifestyle i just couldn't do that the price is too much
a young man with servants ran toward the group we all stopped i recognized this one	so abel who do you think is in control of your life? have you ever gone without eating for a day? have you ever had the experience of not getting what you wanted?	so abel you asked me how you can be closer to god? maybe to be close to god means you are part of this struggle so that the oppressed do not suffer so unjustly what do you say? would you like to come with us? would you really like to be closer to god?	jesus' eyes saddened abel fled through the plaza fleeing jesus' invitation
abel was now kneeling before jesus his family owned huge amounts of land and had lots of treasures	jesus i give generously to the needy	abel froze did not say anything what consequences would this bring to his life? what would his relatives think? he had social gatherings he needed to attend	i came over and sat down next to jesus i could feel his sadness and disappointment
abel saying jesus i heard you preaching at the lake last night i could not sleep i kept asking myself how does one grow closer to god?	no abel i am talking about something else we are about to leave this village i invite you now to come with us to live with the forgotten	jesus stayed silent for a long time then saying how hard it is to find happiness if you don't live your life for others	abel thinks happiness lies in all of his possessions but how wrong he is
jesus inviting this one to sit on a bench in the plaza	this group lives in the village nearby where we are going their sons have been killed by the romans many in the village are widows we will spend two days there	this was the moment abel could respond to the invitation to be closer to god but abel was not expecting such a radical proposal	if he had come with us and helped cook for the sick in the village or if he had spoken with the mother whose sons have been killed maybe he would have been changed maybe he would not have stayed the same so really abel did not want to change but instead grow closer to the idol of security and comfort
so abel you would like to be closer to god? do you keep the commandments? do you respect the law?	it was the first time that abel was wordless he did not know what to say	to leave everything he had and to go and work with those whose lives have been destroyed by the powerful? what would happen if he really did follow jesus? what would his life be like?	to be closer to my abba is about giving away everything to then receive everything
jesus ever since i was young i have been faithful in keeping all the commandments but when i was listening to you at the lake and watched how people responded to you i knew i had never experienced a master like you something happened within me i knew i wanted to be closer to god i knew i wanted to meet with you have even heard	abel i ask you again the same question who do you think is in control of your life?	there was a fleeting movement when he considered leaving everything maybe then he would finally feel close to god	the kingdom of heaven is worth more than anything else in the world
	jesus called a young man over he was the same age		

