

Jubilee Mid-Day Prayer Preaching
May 24, 2009
Sister Gloria Marie Jones

Scripture: Revelation 7: 9-12

My Sister jubilarians, the Beloved of God.

Our treasured family members and friends, and you my Sisters, I greet you also on this beautiful day as the Beloved of God.

Our reading from Revelation this morning sets before us a great multitude beyond counting from every nation and race, people and language. We have a little glimpse of such a gathering here today. But most importantly, what a wonderful testimony these words are to the inclusivity of God. What a challenging invitation to ourselves, our Dominican Order, our country and world--to live and to preach without compromise such absolute inclusivity. What a profound gift that would be to our world.

This great multitude are the ones marked with the seal of God. This is indeed an apt image to celebrate the mysterious gift of God's love which found and claimed each of you in your younger years in Leon, Guanajuato, in Pasadena, San Gabriel, Alhambra, Oakland, Mexico City, Hayward, Arcadia, East Texas. And it is this same God of love that gathers you here today.

The wonder and mystery of this gift is that through these 70, 60, 50, and 25 years of religious profession, the constant, unrelenting impulse of God's Love has shaped you, led you, redeemed you whether you were conscious or unconscious of the gift. It has been and continues to be free, extravagant, totally unearned love and mercy...present to each of us!

And so how right it is to proclaim: *Blessing and glory and thanksgiving and honor to our God. Amen Alleluia*

God's Word from Revelation depicts this great multitude bowing before the throne of God with palm branches in their hands. I have to admit this isn't an image I would readily use to describe you, our jubilarians. There is something more down to earth and pragmatic about you than this!

But in fact you give powerful witness today to the radical message that

God is the center of your life, of our life, of ALL life.

You have come to personally know this God as tender, Divine Mercy, as constant faithful friend, as your Lord and your God, your Shepherd companion, your strength and joy, as God beyond imagining.

Your lives, the renewal of your vows this day, proclaim just how real this God is.

Once again you stand before the people of God and preach very clearly this God is worth everything, even your life. And through your vows you commit your life energy to live and proclaim the truth of God's love, not alone, not as independent agents, but with your Dominican sisters, your life companions, who gather with you today to celebrate and give thanks for your "yes" of the past, of the present, your "yes" until death. We join you today in renewing our own commitment..

And all of you, family, friends, and ministry partners. who gather with us in this celebration, you give testimony to the fact that we don't exist for ourselves. We exist to give ourselves in service of God's people, especially the young, the poor and the vulnerable.

Jubilees are moments when our eye sight is sharpened, the fog is lifted and we get another glimpse and remember all over again how extravagant and faithful is our God's love, how blessed we are, and how truly we are the Beloved of God.

Thank you, our Sister Jubilarians, Sisters Jean Marie, Antonia, Veronica, Jeanne, Mara Anne, Brigid, Cecilia, Lucha, Mary and Madeline, for gifting us with this moment to remember and to celebrate.

In this spirit of praise and thanksgiving I invite us all to proclaim wholeheartedly the last sentence of God's Word to us:

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! AMEN ALLELUIA