

REFLECTION FOR JANUARY, 2011

STEPPING OUT ON THE JOURNEY

by Susanne Thibault, MSBT

The Advent and Christmas events in Scripture point to Jesus stepping into the human story as one whose life is “on the move.” From the beginning he is companioned by Mary and Joseph whose lives were graced to provide Jesus with a safe, secure and nurturing environment. With them he walked the path of learning and integrating the rich religious traditions, beliefs, rituals and values of God’s deepest desire for the human family. Through his Hebrew roots and ancestors he learned to recognize the core of his Father’s will and thus his own identity as God’s Word made flesh. Advent and Christmas readings provide us with signs and announcements of the Life of Jesus which matured as he grew in grace and understanding how his message and mission were so bound to the will of his Father – that all may know the saving power of God.

This season is a good time for the Missionary Cenacle to remember that we too are people on the move. We have dedicated ourselves to be living sign’s of Jesus’ message and mission in the daily providence of God moving and calling us to respond to the person and situation before us. We do not have to go far to discover God’s will for us. All that is necessary is for us to be present to the now in this place and time. Through the gifts of the Spirit we are inspired to seek and find the living water which moves us into the apostolic response needed in each situation. In this way we live out our mission for the love of God and the good of our neighbor.

The accumulation of our personal and communal missionary stories produces a rich foundation for building up our sense of mission as it aligns us with our religious roots and vision wherever we are. I have experienced this call to be in greater harmony with the Bethlehem of our spiritual/apostolic founders during a Cenacle Spiritual exercises retreat at Holy Trinity this summer. An inner movement led me to humbly accept the need to move from one mission and to a search for a new ministry. I had already decided that it was time to make the Spiritual Exercises, even though I had resisted doing it in Holy Trinity in the heat of August. In the end I experienced a great congruence of recognizing God’s providence in leading me from a difficult decision to leave one mission and to be open to beginning again in Faith. The Cenacle prayers, readings, hot days, community, spiritual direction, walks to our Shrines and the stories of our early Cenacle helped me identify again with what attracted me to the Cenacle. I reclaimed what has kept me faithful and what has bound me the unconditional love of our Triune God. One

more transition, one more move, one new community to serve. My trembling knees have become strengthened so I may continue to say “yes” to step out in faith again, in the footsteps of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, Father Judge, Mother Boniface and Dr. Healy. Come, let us continue the journey to announce the story begun in the “yes” of faith passed on from one generation to the next , yesterday, today and tomorrow.

1) What experiences of Cenacle lore continue to inspire me in the apostolate?

2) Are there any lasting fruits of my experience of the Cenacle Exercises that I still see in my apostolate?