

Augustana College
Chapel of Reconciliation

Collin Taphorn

10 October 2008

Texts

Mark 2:23-28

²³One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of the grain. ²⁴The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

²⁵He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions"

²⁷Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The word of the Lord

Psalms 131

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty

I do not concern myself with great matters

or things too wonderful for me.
But I have stilled and quieted my soul;
like a weaned child with its mother,
like a weaned child is my soul within me
Israel, put your hope in the Lord, both now and forevermore.

Music

"There is a Balm in Gilead" - ELW #614

"When Peace Like a River" - ELW #785

Sermon

In today's gospel reading Jesus' is accused of violating Jewish law. One Sabbath he and his disciples are walking through a field and were picking grain to eat because they were hungry. The sneaky Pharisees note the behavior of his disciples and charge Jesus with condoning their crime of harvesting grain on the Sabbath. In defense Jesus relates the story of David giving his companions consecrated bread to eat in violation of tradition. David breached Jewish law to fulfill the needs of his companions. The Pharisees had lost sight of what it meant in the original commandment to keep the Sabbath Holy. Jesus corrects the Pharisees by telling them that the Sabbath was made for the people. God had charged the Jews (for their own good) to put aside one day of every seven to rest the body and more importantly the soul. The people of Israel needed a day of rest and relaxation set aside to further their relationship with God.

People today, me as much as anyone, have trouble taking time for rest and reflection and can look at this story as justification for not taking time to rest in the Lord. As a young adult in the prime of my life I have had trouble slowing down and taking time for myself. It seems that quite often when I do have some time set aside it ends up getting filled with some type of activity. It is easy to get caught up

living life, there is so much to learn and do, that it is easy to forget to take a break for my own good.

A little over a year ago I caught a virus that eventually made its way into my chest cavity and attacked my heart muscle, acute viral cardiomyopathy. The experience in itself was not that traumatizing, I got adequate health care and amazingly enough was able in four days to go from almost needing a heart transplant to walking (very slowly) out of the hospital. Now in case it hasn't already been assumed even a small case of cardiomyopathy knocks you off your feet. At the age of 21 I went from being a regular college student: staying up late at night, biking everywhere around town and generally being full of energy, to sleeping through large portions of the day after a full night's rest. Augustana is not a very big campus, but I can remember taking 15 minutes to get from Stavig Hall to the science building.

One would think that devoid from any strenuous physical activity that I would have plenty of time for reflection. Oddly enough that wasn't the case. Even in the hospital I would go on walks around the cardiac ward whenever I felt up to the task, it was easy to be busy with my family constantly around me and cable right in front of me. Not that there weren't periods of boredom, I just didn't focus on myself, and the state I was in. After coming back to school which was only possible because of my family, friends and the Augustana community I continued to be constantly busy with classes and friends.

I wasn't until several weeks after my release from the hospital and coming back to school that I finally broke down, until I finally took time to sit down and think about what I had gone through and was continuing to work through. I had talked about the experience, but hadn't digested how close I really was to death and the impact it would have on the rest of my life. My life had slowed down a lot, but remained as busy as ever. When early one Friday morning I fainted in the dormitory the severity of what I had gone through finally hit me: cardiomyopathy isn't a trivial ailment and my recovery wasn't going to take days or weeks, but months and years. I remember those couple of days very clearly, it was then that I started to rest and try and put my spirit at ease. I talked with Pastor Paul, family, friends and took time to sit and reflect on what I was going through.

Our reading from the Psalms today is a prayer where the speaker is telling how he has quieted his soul like weaned child and now rests in the trust of God. Likewise, I could not even contemplate the severity of my illness and proceed to truly trust in God until I had slowed down, and stopped trying to do more than I was truly capable of. I had tried so hard to return to a normal life or at least to affect a normal life that I had not slowed down enough to be truly thankful for the recovery I had been given. When I had finally 'stilled and quieted my soul,' I was able to realize how wonderful everyone in my life had been. My family was there with me constantly, several of my friends came down

the first day I was ill to visit me in the Intensive Care Unit and everyone in the Augustana community was helpful however they could be.

It is so hard for us to slow down enough to see God's presence in our lives. In today's Gospel Christ criticizes the Pharisees for not keeping to the true spirit of the Sabbath, and try to become closer to God. I urge each and every one of you to repeat this prayer or one of your own devising today and rest, even if it is only for ten minutes. No distractions, and purge everything from your mind except for your relationship with God. For 'the Sabbath was made for man,' each one of us needs to rest and step back from our lives.

But I have stilled and quieted my soul;
like a weaned child with its mother,
like a weaned child is my soul within me
Israel, put your hope in the Lord, both now and forevermore.
Amen

Prayer

Holy Father, we pray that you help us all still and quiet our souls

To remember the true purpose of the Sabbath

And remember its spirit throughout the rest of our week

Help us find time in our busy schedules to thank and trust in you

Bless us with the comfort of your presence

Help us to more fully realize our relationship with you

And be receptive to all that you do throughout our day

Amen

OUTREACH - Groups of students lead worship and youth retreats across the region. A great way to get acquainted with a smaller group of students of all ages with a modest time commitment! The teams are forming now, so if you are interested in joining, come to the chapel office soon! **Training for all outreach members - TONIGHT - Fri., Oct. 10th, beginning with a picnic at the chapel at 5:30 pm., training event afterward at Our Savior's Luth. (across 33rd St., south of Bergsaker))**

PEER MINISTRY - "It is not a job. It is an attitude." Peer ministers develop communication skills that allow them to reach out to effectively help those around them. Peer ministers learn ways to develop welcoming and accepting attitudes and become aware of the hurts and needs of others, and how to be caring listeners. Augie is embracing this wonderful opportunity to become yet an even more welcoming Christian community. If you're interested in being trained as a Peer Minister, contact Hannah Drewes. hmdrewes07@ole.augie.edu.

SERVE THE BANQUET - Campus Ministry is serving the Banquet (the soup kitchen downtown) on **Mon., Oct. 13th**. There are two shifts for workers: the afternoon shift (from 2-4:30 pm) where the meal is prepared, and the evening shift (5-8 pm) to serve. A sign-up sheet is on the Narthex table if you would like to participate. **We still need 6-8 servers!**

SEMINARY VISIT - A group visit is being planned for the LSTC (Lutheran Theological Seminary) in Chicago on Sat., Nov. 7th - 11th. The group will be driving to Omaha and then flying to Chicago. There will be several options for housing. A travel stipend of \$300 is available to students for seminary visits. Interested? Contact Beth Singleton egsingleton@ole.augie.edu or stop by the chapel.

Chapel Schedule

Friday (10 th)	Outreach Training -(all members) -5:30 picnic pm at the chapel, then go to Our Savior's Luth. for training. (Across 33 rd from Berksaker)
Sunday (12 th)	Worship, 11 am - Pr. Paul & Amanda Korth
Monday (13 th)	Worship, 10 am - Pr. Olin Sletto
Tuesday (14 th)	Koinonia, 10 am - special guest Sarah Rohde, Young Adults in Global Mission
Wednesday (14 th)	Holy Communion, 10 am - Sarah Rohde