

**Being Disciples of Jesus
in Charity, Justice, and Prophecy
Why Simply Being Good-hearted is not Enough**

**Oblate School of Theology
National Retreat
February 6-9, 2023**

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Sessions ...

1. **Monday AM** - What is Social Justice and its distinctiveness from Charity
2. **Monday Afternoon** – The Place of Social Justice with Christian Spirituality as a whole
3. **Monday Evening** – Some Principles from Scripture and Church Teachings

1. **Tuesday AM** – Justice and the Ecological Crisis
2. **Tuesday Evening** – One major social justice issue – *The Inequality of Women*

1. **Wednesday AM** – One major social justice issue – *Justice and End of Life Issues*
(Monsignor Jerry McCarthy)
2. **Wednesday PM** – One major social justice issue – *Justice and Abortion*

1. **Thursday AM** – Ten Principles for Christian Prophecy
2. **Thursday PM** – Quiet Prophecy



Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

“Commandments for the Long Haul”

1. A prophet makes a vow of love, not of alienation.

- A critical distinction between stirring up trouble and offering prophecy out of love.
- A critical distinction between operating out of egoism and operating out of faith and hope.
- A prophet risks misunderstanding, but never seeks it.
- A prophet is “single-minded”, can be misunderstood, but seeks always to have a mellow heart.
 - *When is resistance a mature response to the systems and powers that claim our lives?
And when does it become a petulant form of egoism? Daniel Berrigan*





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

2. A prophet is grounded in a reality from beyond this world.

- Jesus as paradigm, as perceived in Luke's Gospel
- Daniel Berrigan as seeking always to act out of the Gospel
 - "Monks have secrets worth knowing!" Dan Berrigan
 - If your prophetic stance doesn't save the world, it can at least save your own integrity and sanity. Dan Berrigan





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

3. A prophet draws his or her cause from Jesus not from an ideology.

- A story - “Sincere people will hear the gospel, but they can turn away from ideology.”
- The difference between Jesus and “Green Peace”.

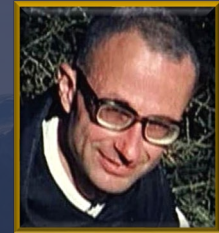


Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

4. A prophet is committed to non-violence.

- A story – Christian de Cherge’s reaction to first meeting terrorists face to face
- A prophet seeks always to disarm.
- A prophet as seeking to incarnate God’s “powerlessness”, *Exousia*, in this world.
- Some “notes” on just war and non-violence.
 - “Be powerless criminals in a time of criminal power.” Daniel Berrigan





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

5. A prophet articulates God's voice for the poor and for the earth.

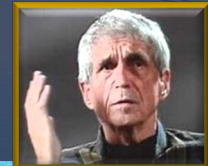
- Any Gospel that isn't good news for the poor is not the Gospel of Jesus.
- Any prophet that isn't speaking for the poor is not a Prophet of Jesus.
- Who are the poor?

✚ “Widows, orphans, and strangers”

✚ The “excluded one” – “It is better that one man should die for the people.”

✚ “The poor are those people who don't have a right to have rights.”

- “We've added a quality to the church that the crucified Christ never envisaged: the church compatible.” Daniel Berrigan



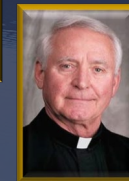


Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

6. A prophet doesn't foretell the future but properly names the present – in function of the future.

- A prophet reads where the finger of God is within everyday life, in function of naming our fidelity or infidelity to God and in function of pointing to our future in terms of God's plan for us.
 - *“Everything can be fixed or cured, but it should be names correctly.” R. Rohr*
 - *“A symptom suffers most when it doesn't know where it belongs.” James Hillman*
 - *The language of God is the experience God writes into our lives. John of the Cross*
 - *“Learn to read the signs of the times”. Jesus*
 - *A prophet is a meteorologist of the spirit. John Heagle*





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

7. A prophet speaks out of a horizon of hope.

- Hope as distinct from “wishful thinking” and “optimism”
- A story of hope from Teilhard de Chardin
- Hope as based upon God’s promise and God’s power as revealed in the resurrection of Jesus.



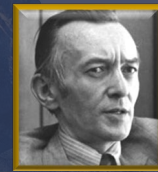
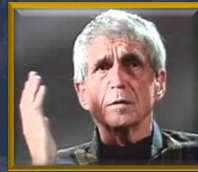


Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

- Some examples of hope:

- *Daniel Berrigan*
- *Bishop Tutu*
- *William Stringfellow*
- *Jim Wallis*
- *Pierre Olivier Trembley*



- o “Do prophetic acts, not because the outcome is assured, but because the integrity and value of the act speak loudly.” Dan Berrigan

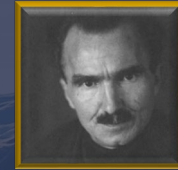


Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

8. A prophet's heart and cause are never a ghetto.

- “The bosom of God is not a ghetto, but the heart of man often is.” Nikos Kazantzakis
- “In my Father’s house there are many rooms.” Jesus
- False prophecy as ...
 - Making God our own tribal deity.
 - As putting self-interest or the interests of one group above the common good.





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

9. A prophet doesn't just speak or write, a prophet acts, and acts with courage, even at the cost of death.

- A prophet is a “magus” who can also act.
- A prophet has the enough altruistic love, hope, and courage to not count the cost of prophecy.
- Examples:

- *Daniel Berrigan*
- *Oscar Romero*
- *Stan Rother*
- *Dorothy Stang*





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

- A prophet never seeks martyrdom, but accepts it if it finds him or her.
 - “Because we want peace with half a heart and half a life, war, of course, continues, because the waging of war is total – but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial.” Dan Berrigan





Thursday AM -

Principles for a Christian Prophecy

10. A prophet can discern at which times to “park the placard” and “bring out the basin and towel”.

- A story – Raymond Brown on Jesus’ washing the disciples’ feet.





Supplemental -

Daniel Berrigan on being a Prophet

- “I know that the prophetic vision is not popular today in some spiritual circles. But our task is not to be popular or to be seen as having an impact, but to speak the deepest truths that we know. We need to live our lives in accord with the deepest truths we know, even if doing so does not produce immediate results in the world.” ... “The good is to be done because it is good, not because it goes somewhere.”
- “I draw from the prophets a very strong bias in favor of the victim and a very strong sense of judgment of evil structures and those who run against them. The prophets and Christ talk about the God who stand at the bottom with the victims and with the ‘widows and orphans’ and witnesses with them in the world, from that terrifying vantage point which is like the bottom of the dry well that Jeremiah was thrown in. “



Supplemental -

Daniel Berrigan on being a Prophet

- “The best way to be hopeful is to do hopeful things.”
- “How can those who honor themselves allow others to be dishonored?”
- “The saints were right: their best moments were on the run, in jail, at the edge of social acceptability.”
- “The question is: How to love one’s enemy even while one’s life stands in opposition to him.”
- “The payment for birth is blood; the cost of rebirth cannot be cheap.”
- “The prayers of the church will prevail against all principalities.”

