

July 14, 2008
Monday of the Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Readings of the day may be found on the following link:

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab>

Isaiah 1:10-17

Psalms 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23

Matthew 10:34-11:1

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

Yesterday, I suggested that a rule of life would keep us on track—improve our chance that we reach the destination we desire. Today, as I hear the words of the gospel, I am more certain of my need to have a plan. I am aware that left to my own devices, I would allow the tasks and external demands of life to consume me. I might also allow myself to be swept up in the cultural message of the day. And then the direction of my life would be altered or deterred. I would end up where I did not want to go, but did choose by default, simply because I did not take the time to design my life. What does a life of design require? For one, self-reflection: to know who I am and what I want, to know what gets in the way of my intentions, to grapple with my values, and to think about where each action will take me. Two, choice: to intentionally choose what will be the center of my life, to choose the actions of each day, and to choose how I want to live. And three: to support my decisions with practices that sustain me in the life I have chosen. A spiritual practice is a behavior that helps us to live more deeply in God. It is a practice that opens us up to what God is saying to us. Its value in our life is measured by its fruits. If it takes up to a life of discipleship, a life where the fruits of the Spirit are more apparent in our behaviors, than it is a worthwhile practice. If it makes us more self-absorbed than it would be best to leave it behind and find another practice.

"To live is to choose. But to choose well, you must know who you are and what you stand for, where you want to go and why you want to get there."

Kofi Annan quotes (Ghanaian diplomat, seventh secretary-general of the United Nations, 2001 Nobel Peace Prize.)

Where do I want to go and how will I get there?