

“That was the week that was....”

In 1964-65 there was a TV program by that name. It started in Britain and migrated to the US. David Frost, Phyllis Newman and others.

Looking back from this Sunday, I would say exactly those words: “That was the week that was.” The past seven days have changed our country and the world. In the middle of that week was the Inauguration of President Joe Biden, the oldest (and perhaps by experience the most prepared) president to lead our country. At his side is Vice-President Kamala Harris, the first Black, South Asian and woman Vice-President.

Among notable moments at the Inauguration, for me at least, was a reading by Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman. If you missed it, you can find it at “Amanda Gorman The Hill We Climb.”

What Amanda shared is quite appropriate for our day. A few of her lines are especially applicable to us at St. James. Those lines also echo the message addressed to us in this Sunday’s gospel.

At one point Amanda says, “If we’re to live up to our own time/ Then victory won’t lie in the blade/ But in all the bridges we’ve made.” St. James: the bridge; us: bridges among ourselves and in the community. “If we are to live up to our own time...” we of St. James must recommit to being the bridge wherever we are, even (or especially) in Covid.

Going on, Amanda says, “This is the era of just redemption/ We feared at its inception/ We did not feel prepared to be the heirs/ of such a terrifying hour/ but within it we found the power/ to author a new chapter.” Jesus in today’s gospel: “This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel....Come after me.” The disciples did find it “a terrifying hour,” but in Jesus they found the power to take their part to author a new chapter for humanity. That call is ours now; we must take the power - received in Baptism in Jesus - to bring the time of fulfillment in us and our world today.

Amanda: “We will not march back to what was/ but move to what shall be.” For the disciples there was no going back. Nor for us. A pandemic; stay-at-home; no church community gatherings. We must “move to what shall be.” This time of trial and testing must make us stronger; keeping contact; looking forward; preparing ourselves and the community for “what shall be.”

Amanda closes: “The new dawn blooms as we free it/ For there is always light/ if only we’re brave enough to see it/ if only we’re brave enough to be it.”

So the new dawn blooms in us. Bring it now: “You are the light of the world.”

Ways we can “move to what shall be” in this time of Covid and distancing:

Call one another

Write one another – on paper or electronically

Read, dream and share *what shall be* in the *new dawn* and restored in-person community

Use the remaining interval to find those who need community, love, assistance, *light*

Determine to *be* the light, even now

There’s always a way to *author a new chapter*
