

## “The Eye of a Hurricane”

10:00 AM, 02/26/17

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Considering the basic message of today’s Scriptures, I want to use the image of the eye of a hurricane. While turbulent winds and rain rotating counterclockwise at over 75 miles per hour can churn up land or sea, the center of a hurricane remains relatively calm, roughly 20 to 40 miles in diameter. Calm in the midst of chaos. Today’s gospel is about maintaining calm. Jesus says “Do not worry (Matthew 6: 24-34).” Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. “Rest in God alone, my soul,” the psalmist says. Live in the eye of the hurricane.

There is plenty to worry about tomorrow. Consider the past ten years, 2007 to 2017, beginning with the advent of the i-phone. Technology has moved so fast in recent years that we cannot catch up. The director of engineering at Google.com says “we’re entering an age of acceleration. Because of the explosive power of exponential growth, the twenty-first century will be equivalent to 20, 000 years of progress at today’s rate of progress.”

There is always a lag between innovation and the apprehension of its consequences. We are living in that lag. We have created a world with vast new territories – called cyberspace – that are law-free, values-free, and, seemingly, God-free. We are out of control.

For example. We have experienced exponential acceleration in the field of intel processors, solar power, microchips, fiber-optic cables – changes in technology so rapid that the technological advances are sometimes doubled in just a few years. We can’t keep up. In the last two generations, the population of the world has increased by two billion people. The world population today is 7.2 billion. By 2050, it is estimated to be 9.7 billion, mostly in areas of the world that can ill afford to feed and shelter more people.

Most distressing is the fact that there are tools for encryption (storing data secretly) that cannot be accessed without a special password. We are aware that terrorists are able to use these tools to communicate freely without interference.

Teenagers can acquire apps that allow them to access data for their smart-phones that parents cannot prevent. A secret code known only to them opens the way to whatever garbage they choose to read or watch. Close to home, in Canon City, Colorado west of Pueblo, not long ago, more than one hundred students at the local high school were caught trading photos and hiding them in secret photo-vault smartphone applications. Pornography free of charge.

Someone has asked, “Is God in cyber-space”? Our ancestors felt assured that God would intervene for them to punish the bad and reward the good. Today our sense is that God remains hidden, whether in cyberspace or in the neighborhood shopping mall. To have God in the room with you, whether it’s a real room or a chat room, you have to bring him there yourself by how you behave there, by the moral choices and mouse clicks you make (Thomas Friedman, in his recent book **THANK YOU FOR BEING LATE** – my source for much of the ideas presented here.)

We have never before stood at this moral fork in the road – *where one of us could kill all of us and all of us could fix everything if we really decided to do so*. The world needs to unite as one community, working together, coming to grips with the exponential acceleration in the instruments available to us (both good and bad). Is that possible?

Come back to the gospel about worrying about everything under the sun. To be able to live in the eye of today’s hurricane, we need to have faith in God. Worry is the spoiler that seeps into everything, our thoughts and moods, our relationships and projects. Worry deteriorates what it touches. And it betrays something significant we may not intend to reveal. It shows that our faith is not in God but in ourselves. “Rest in God alone, my soul.”

The opening prayer for today’s Liturgy is worth repeating: “Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that the course of our world may be directed by your peaceful rule and that your Church may rejoice, untroubled in her devotion.” Look at the birds in the sky and the way the wild flowers grow. If God so clothes the grass of the field, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? So do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.