

Traveling Companion: No Alleluias in my life

Fr. Michael Tracey

On Easter Sunday, amid a packed church, a young man, in his early twenties, sat with the choir. Later, he got up and went outside. Following the Mass, a choir member found him outside and asked him if he would like to join the choir. "I can't sing that," replied the young man. "Why?" asked the choir member. The young man simply said, "Because there is no alleluias in my life."

On Easter Monday morning, I checked my email. I noticed an email from someone I hadn't heard from before. The young man, different from the young man who sat in the choir, had written the email on Easter Sunday. He wrote, "Hello, Father. I was in your Mass this morning and the message that was given was so appealing to me. It was like God was talking to me. I have or am in a hole that I haven't been able to leave behind and live with a smile in my face. I have tried to avoid it with work, with projects, but I always get to the point that I get discouraged. I am not sure if I should tell you all this about it, but I am feeling really lonesome and sad for my situation and what I have done in the past. I know that these actions are in the past and I can't do anything about it. I know I can just try to do better next time. Father, I feel so lonely. Some time ago, I was perhaps doing wonderfully, however everything fell apart. I had friends and all of them left. Some of those friends are not even friends now."

He then went on to talk about a relationship that had gone sour and ended and about the resentment in his heart. He continued, "As I write this note, I start to feel a little better. I am just a little confused regarding my future, but what makes me feel worse was the fact that I saw her with another individual today. I never believed she was like that. I feel like the greatest stupid person with big horns in my head. I feel bad to the point that I don't want, need or should look for another person. I am one that is trying to live the best I can. I was a gentleman. However, it seems that money, sex and father image is what women are looking for. I know I should not say this. I am a simple, poor guy that is lonesome, and maybe the only thing that I have to offer is love and honesty. I am just feeling uneasy today. I ask the Lord to forgive me and give me the peace and guidance to carry my cross. I am asking Him to lead me to whatever he want me to go and take this pain and sadness away and put light on me."

As I thought about the two young men, I began to reflect on the story in Luke's gospel about the two dejected disciples on the road to Emmaus, following the resurrection of Jesus. (Luke 24:13-24). I prayed that the Lord, like with the two on the road, would come and walk with them, listen to their sad stories, dashed hopes; that he would break open His word for them and that they would recognize Him in the breaking of bread so that there might be some Alleluias in their young lives.