

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Cf. Psalm 119 (118):49-50

Remember your word to your servant, O Lord, / by which you have given me hope. / This is my comfort when I am brought low.

Or:

1 John 3:16

By this we came to know the love of God: / that Christ laid down his life for us; / so we ought to lay down our lives for one another.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this heavenly mystery, O Lord,
restore us in mind and body,
that we may be coheirs in glory with Christ,
to whose suffering we are united
whenever we proclaim his Death.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Reflection

João-of-All-Trades

On our first free day after a weeklong media conference in São Paulo, Brazil, we were elated to be off to the beach. Piling into the bus, we were not too surprised to find João in the driver's seat. The Redemptorist seminary's longtime maintenance man cheerfully wore many hats. "João-of-all-trades," we called him.

After a scenic two-hour drive, we arrived at one of Ubatuba's glorious beaches, clambered off the bus, and plunged into the cool, sparkling ocean. As I paddled in the surf, I caught sight of João slowly making his way to the water's edge. He was off to the side, apart from the group. He

took a few steps into the ocean and stood stock-still for what seemed a very long time, gazing at the horizon.

I felt sorry for him, supposing that either he could not swim or was not permitted to swim while on the clock. At lunch, I sat beside him and said something inane about the lovely day. He turned to me and offered, “It is my first time to see the ocean.” Burned in my memory is the expression on his face: pure, childlike wonder. It was a glimpse of humankind’s original innocence.

Is this what Jesus meant when he said, “For although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike,” and “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see”?

For João, the ocean was a portal to heaven that day. For me, it was João’s radiant face.

..... Alicia von Stamwitz

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