

By Laura Orcutt, worship leader

They recognized him. They, the all inclusive they, recognized him. People, creation, spirits all recognized him. In a time today, hidden behind a mask, peering above it to try to recognize another masked face or perhaps flee from an unmasked one, reflect on the words "they recognized him." They recognized him then and they would recognize him even today, masked. But, would we recognize him amongst the turbulence and frustrating times of today? A masked man with authority given to him by God, enabling all of creation to obey him. Was it for fame? Notoriety? Or was it to create the loving awe of the Holy One of God. That man was in torment, but with authority, Jesus freed him.

As we create the beloved community, think of the one who spoke with authority in this passage. With authority, Jesus created a man freed from turbulence. With authority, the Word was made flesh. With authority, God created. Why did He create? But to love and to create that love. And that love responds in creating that beloved community. No matter the time, the turbulence, the frustration, or the lack of clarity, He loved and so do we, responding to that love.

Read through the passage, later today or perhaps tomorrow, and contemplate. Practice the steps of Lectio Divina.

Listen with the ear of your heart. What stands out to you? Take a bite. Pick a word or phrase. Repeat it over and over to let it sink into your heart and mind. Rest in it.

Read the passage again, slowly ingesting the goodness and depth of that word or phrase. Rest in it.

Read the passage yet again, turning over and over the word or phrase that spoke to you to see how you are moved. Slowly savor the richness of the meaning. Rest in it.

Read the passage for the last time. Embed that word or phrase deeply into your heart, digesting. How is it changing what you think and do? Now just be for a few minutes. Rest in God.

Are you with God or wrestling with a demon inside? Let go and be freed to rest in the love of God.

Do this same practice with other things that you read. Listen, ingest, savor, and digest until you feel completely satisfied and truly taste the goodness of Christ Jesus. Even in an unlikely passage such as this, taste and see the goodness of God. And rest in His love.