

January 12, 2008  
Saturday after the Epiphany

Readings of the day may be found on the following link:

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab>

1 John 5:14-21

Psalm 149:1-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b

John 3:22-30

*He must increase; I must decrease.*

Today is the last day of the Christmas season. Tomorrow, we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord and move into Ordinary Time. The hoopla of Christmas is over, the presents are put away, and in some instances forgotten or returned. The frantic pace has slowed down. The days filled with reminders of past times, both good and sad, are behind us. So is the focus on the birth of Christ, the waiting, the celebrating, the joy of possibility that new beginnings bring. We return to the days of ordinary life. John's words are wise, strong, and true. In six words he captures for us the whole of our journey. It is not a matter of getting it right or becoming all that we can become. It is simply a matter of getting our ego out of the way and letting God work in us. It is simply a matter of our willingness to cooperate with grace so that God's plan can become a reality in this day. I know someone who prays this prayer everyday, several times a day. "Lord, let me decrease so that you may increase in me." Yesterday I was struck by the vulnerability of Jesus. I see this prayer as a petition for the grace to be vulnerable enough to be used by God. I remember a time when I was part of a group caring for a friend who was dying. She frequently said that she did not want to use us up. When she said this to me, I stood there, part of me willing to be used, and part of me wanting to protect myself from the pain of companioning her in her last days. I believe this is where most of us live—in this tension between self-protection and service. This is a perfect prayer as we bridge the gap between celebrating the great gift we have been given and living the reality that we are called to be that gift to the world.

*"I believe that we have no real access to who we really are except in God. Only when we rest in God can we find the safety, the spaciousness, and the scary freedom to be who we are, all that we are, more than we are, and less than we are."*

-Carl Jung Letters

*Let go and let God be God in you.*  
Meister Eckhart