

January 21, 2008
Monday of the Second Week of Ordinary Time
Memorial of St. Agnes

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

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

1 Samuel 15:16-23

Psalm 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23

Mark 2:18-22

Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins.

The work I do has taught me that we have an amazing capacity to create reality in our own image. We have the capacity to see things in ways that support our position and deny any other possibility. This gospel reminds me to live with an open mind and an open heart. In fact, it goes one step further. It informs me that I can only discover truth if I am willing to open my mind to other ways of seeing, doing, and believing. This is not an easy task. The more we hang onto our beliefs, the more ingrained our way of thinking becomes until it is the only reality we know and trust. We have all encountered this in our lives. We all have met a person who insists that their way of seeing and doing is the only way of seeing and doing. This is called distorted thinking. This kind of distorted thinking runs the gamut from closed mindedness to pathology. When we are in this mode, there is no room for the teachings of Jesus. Closed mindedness and compassion are not bedfellows. Nor is closed mindedness and mercy, justice, or forgiveness. Somehow we have to open our hearts and minds in order to take in the full message of Jesus. That message is so much bigger than we allow ourselves to hear. I have learned that it is fairly easy to spot this closed mindedness in others; it is difficult to see it in myself. Today, I pray for the grace of openness. I pray for the people who have challenged me when I have been closed and narrow in my thinking. I pray for their continued presence in my life.

Man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through the narrow chinks of his cavern. - William Blake

Where am I more wedded to my beliefs and judgments than I am to living the message of Jesus?