




GOD IN DISASTERS?

March 7th, 2010

Luke 13

“God’ll get you for that, Walter.” Bea Arthur in her role as Maude in the sitcom of the same name repeatedly chided Walter (Bill Macy) when his behavior displeased her. The comment reflects a part of our culture’s image of God as a source whose role is to exact punishment on evil-doers.

-  *What do you think is God’s intention today in natural disasters--earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, wildfires, etc.?*
-  *What do you think is God’s intention today in man-made disasters--high-speed auto accidents, careless home accidents, some cancers and heart disease, etc.?*
-  *What do you think is God’s intention today in disasters that others cause you to experience--your injury from a hazardous building structure, your injury from his irresponsible driving, your scars from an abusive relationship, your diagnosis from second-hand smoke, your broken bones from falling on unsalted ice, etc.?*

GOD IN GRACE!

Jesus’ discourse in today’s Gospel reading (St. Luke 13:1-9) went a different direction from pursuing the Father’s role in the two incidents mentioned. However, I remind myself of Is. 55, where the prophet quotes God as saying, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways.” I don’t understand the Divine Mind and God’s intention in disasters. I am driven back to God’s answer to St. Paul’s appeal for removal of his “thorn in the flesh,” “My grace is enough; it’s all you need (2 Cor. 12:9 MSG).” For myself, I find comfort in seeing the catalog of disasters as God’s “attention getters,” calling me to look in and through the disaster for some expression of God’s grace; I am not always successful. But praise God anyway!