

Bishop Broderick S. Pabillo, SDB DD

The Role of the Word of God in my life

Bishop Broderick S. Pabillo

Please insert information on Bishop Pabillo from your database. I can't see anything on him on google but very general information.

I had undergone the usual seminary formation for the priesthood since I entered the seminary at the age of twelve. I had no regrets. I spent my young years filled up with studies, cultural activities, sports and a lot of fellowship with my fellow seminarians and formators. I imbibed the spirituality being inculcated on us – prayers, masses, devotions and outreach programs. I don't remember that there was any special emphasis on the Bible in my life then, although naturally we studied the Bible systematically and it was part of our daily liturgical celebrations. The Word of God was influencing me then but I was not just aware of it. So in myself there was no special significance for it. The only particular devotion that I had with the Bible was that when I was gifted with a Bible by one of my teachers, I took the effort to read a part of it systematically every day . Every time I sat down at night for our regular two-hour study period I made it a point to spend the first fifteen minutes reading the Bible – but just for curiosity's sake, to know what would be found in it. This happened all through my high school days. So I could say that before I graduated high school I had already read the whole Bible. Then when I was in third or fourth year I remember having memorized the Sermon of the Mount because in our literature class we were asked to know by heart a literary piece and I chose the Sermon on the Mount. Again it was more as an academic activity.

I truly became conscious of the Bible when I was asked to specialize in it after my years of theological studies. I was sent to Rome by my superiors to study the Bible because our congregation was planning to set up our own school of theology. I was very hesitant then to study further. I had my heart set to plunge myself into pastoral work after my ordination. So I went to Rome half-heartedly. Besides the Bible was not my choice. It was assigned to me. I was also assigned the Old Testament because my companion had already chosen the New Testament. But somehow along the way a relation of special love grew with the Word of God. At the

beginning it was just out of obedience that I studied the languages but then gradually it was no longer out of obedience but out of personal love and conviction that I studied the texts. I remember that I not only studied the materials assigned to us in our classes but on my own I bought books and searched in the libraries topics in the Bible that interested me, preparing myself for the ministry of teaching that would be my own in the near future.

When I began to teach in 1986 after a three-and-a-half-year stint at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome my love for the Bible grew even more. Somehow in my case it was knowledge that brought about love, and love pushed me deeper into study. Love and knowledge gradually affected my spirituality and my spirituality began to affect my decisions in life.

What convictions did I get from the Bible? One thing that I interiorized is that God is a revealing God. The God of the Scriptures is not a secretive God. He reveals his plans, nay more, he reveals himself to his people. God had been so in the biblical times and God is still so today. If he reveals himself, then it is up to us to listen to him and to see him. How does God reveal himself? He reveals himself in creation, but more especially he reveals himself in history. So history is the stage where God acts through human beings and through events. But in the fullness of time he himself directly entered the stage of history by becoming man. So God is deeply involved in the events of life. This is still so today. So this means that we should be attentive to read the signs of the times in the events that develop in the world. God is there. This gives us an optimistic view of history. No matter how bad the times are, our God is the Lord of History and he is guiding our human story to a definitive end, and this end that would lead to a new heaven and a new earth. This attitude of optimism and trust is very important in my task now since I am involved in the many social concerns of our society. So no matter how grim our situation is and no matter the big problems that we face I do not lose my hope that our history is leading to a good end – in the long run.

Reading the Bible, we Christians use a basic key for understanding it, and this key is Jesus Christ. Jesus is at the heart of the Bible because he is the fulfillment of the promises and in him and through him all things are made. He is the Alpha and the Omega of history. So the Scriptures give me a special sensitivity to Jesus Christ. In fact the Bible makes me know Jesus more and love him deeper. Commitment to Jesus means commitment to his cause, which is God's kingdom, a situation in which God's care for everyone, especially the poor and those set aside, is

given emphasis. *I would say that my love for the poor has been strengthened and given direction by the Bible and is an expression of my commitment to Jesus.* I am now very much involved in the actions of the Church for the poor because of my position and because of the task given to me. The mission is overwhelming but constant contact with the Word of God gives me direction and gives me strength. My preoccupation is that I should take care that my involvement with people should not so eat up all my time that I won't anymore have time to meditate on the Word and pray. If this ever happen, then it would be the beginning of the end of my work for the Kingdom of God.

I can say then that the Bible is very much part of my life but there are no dramatic turn of events that I can point out. Things had happened so gradually. Before I know it I am already caught up in the web of God's love by his Word that summons me. Right now I can identify that my life is standing on three legs – **the Bible, prayer and the poor** – and these three are very much correlated to each other. **The Bible feeds my prayer which gives expressing for my work with the poor.** All three leads me closer to Jesus Christ, the one person for whom my life is dedicated.