

Isaiah 51:1-6

Matthew 16:13-20

Romans 12:1-8

“They shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of God.” AMEN!

“When I find myself in times of trouble,
Mother Mary comes to me.

Speaking words of wisdom.
Let it be.

And in my hour of darkness she is
standing right in front of me.

Speaking words of wisdom.
Let it be.

Let it be, let it be

Let it be, let it be

Whisper words of wisdom.
Let it be.”

This Beatles song, as you might know,
was from their last studio album and
it was released almost a month after
the iconic band’s break up.

I’ve been trying to work it into a sermon

for sometime... to be honest.:-)

It's harder than you might think!

But it makes for a perfect accompaniment
for the message today because the section from

the Letter to the Romans that we just read
lend lessons of "letting it be." (Pause)

Paul began with an appeal to
sister and brothers,
siblings in Christ,
is how we put it today.

"Siblings in Christ, by the mercies of God,
present your bodies..."

It is important we hear these words clearly
for he did not write,
"Make your bodies..."

Paul got it right, here.

"By the mercies of God, present your bodies
as living sacrifices, holy and
acceptable to God."

These clear words offer to us the *already* aspect

that most people do not believe is present
about our bodies.

In a world where movies, diets,
plastic surgery, impossibly proportioned
Barbi dolls, and even self and
family pressures make us think our

body must look a certain way
to be acceptable and pleasing.

Today, God has something different to say.

Each of us, in our own way, have carried
the whispers within that tell us we are
not good enough...

have imperfections that must be hidden...
or controlled... or view as grossly unique.

And it is not only a certain gender's problem.

Teenage boys are suffering from the same
damaged body image - lack of esteem
and abusive eating disorders. (Pause)

I recall in my own Generation X category how
we often used drugs to curb appetites,
had starvation tactics, or would binge eat
only to purge later so that one

could achieve the perfect body.

These days, it may be the same things
but also pharmaceuticals used to increase
the ability to study long hours and have
a “test taking mind.”

Women from the baby boomer generation know
how using cigarettes or amphetamines
helped control appetites because we all

listened to the voices that said
we are not good enough,
not acceptable enough,
not worthy enough.

Yet, for those of us who wanted to listen.

For those who showed up to hear what Paul
had to write or took the time to read
the text on their own, will come to
recognize his healing words.

That is, your bodies, however they are today,
are holy and acceptable to God. (2X)

You're good, you're acceptable, you're worthy.

In fact, Paul delves into neuroscience (sort of)

by stating that this transformation occurs
through the renewing of minds.

Whatever we call it we recognize that religion
and science are not opposed to one another.

Paul taught that the way we think is subject
to change and, more importantly I think, is
that “as we think, so shall we be *changed*.”

He goes on to say that grace,
the gift from God, is behind our transformation
and renewal.

We don't just get there by sheer
determination or willpower.

There are no diets.
There are no drugs.

We don't achieve it by being born into
a certain family or within a certain country.

We get there by letting it be.

Knowing the will of God is in action,
in and around us, and that
the mercies of God descends upon those
who we disagree with, too. (Pause)

This part comes out with his warning
about being overly self-important.

“Don’t think of yourself more highly
than you ought to.”

You’re you because of God and God’s grace.

(Sing)

“And when the broken hearted people,
living in the world agree.

There will be an answer, Let it be.

For though they may be parted there is
still a chance that they will see.

There will be an answer. Let it be.”

This “Let if be” approach is our holistic approach.

The distorted approach of needing
to “fix” ourselves before presenting
our bodies or minds is not biblical and
it is not healthy.

This is the lesson behind God’s call to be set free.

Free to use the gifts God has given and
to honor the gifts God has given to others.

They are all embodiments of God's grace and
an invitation for us to really let it be.

(Sing)

“And when the night is cloudy
There is still a light that shines on me.

Shine until tomorrow.

Let it be

I wake up to the sound of music
Mother Mary comes to me

Speaking words of wisdom.

Let it be, yeah.”

And so the invitation is put before you today.

A time to come forward and
present your bodies as living sacrifices,
holy and acceptable to God.”

As is with an empty hand.

It is already accomplished by God,
receive the Eucharist as a holy gift for holy people.

“Let it be, Let it be,
There is still a light that shines...

Shine until tomorrow. Let it be.”

AMEN!