

Daily Reflection

April 14, 2020

Today's [Daily Office readings](#) include the conclusions to the Gospel of Mark. Yes, that was plural. There are two alternative endings, and both have ancient pedigrees. Neither is lengthy compared to discussion in the other Gospels about events after the Resurrection. But the longer version of Mark's ending has some language not found elsewhere. Speaking of those who will spread the Gospel, Jesus says:

"[T]hey will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them." *Mark 16:18*

That's pretty provocative language. A web search will reveal examples of churches that practice snake-handling as an expression of faith, citing this passage. Needless to say, the practice is controversial. Because this verse is so attention-grabbing, what follows is less likely to be noticed. We are told that after Jesus ascended to Heaven, followers went out to spread the good news,

"... while the Lord worked with them" *Mark 16:20*

This is much more exciting than surviving snakes or poison. The Lord **worked with them**, even after his Ascension. In this, we receive the assurance that Jesus is working with us now. We can be useful even as unperfected works in progress. I see so much evidence of God at work you. People are expressing previously untapped talents, making offerings of high tech artistry, hand-sewn masks, compelling poetry and wondrous humor.

Is there something you have had the urge to do, create or share? It might just be Jesus working with you.

Pastor Kathleen Kelly,

Interim Rector



If you need masks for essential shopping, reply to this message. St. Margaret's volunteers can help.