

Grace Notes

Friday, June 11, 2021

Dear friends:

Today was the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. As I reflected on today's readings, I could not help but think how much the Sacred Heart has to teach us about Love. The message in Hosea likens God's love for us to that of a mother ¹for her child and Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians talks



about the love and devotion God seeks from us,

Finally, the Gospel, describing the death of Jesus

on the cross for us reports blood and water gushing from the side of Jesus when a soldier pierces his heart to make sure he is dead. Bishop Barron in his daily reflection today tells us that no Jewish witness would have missed the point: that this was "the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy that when Yahweh cleansed his temple, water would flow forth for the renewal of the

world." When asked to explain the Law, Jesus gave it so simply: Love God and love your neighbour as yourself. After the events of the last couple of weeks – the discovery of the mass grave of 215 Indigenous children in Kamloops, and a week later a Muslim family mown down in a tragic attack leaving a nine-year-old boy orphaned and four members of his family dead, seemingly just because they were Muslims, we have to ask if human beings will ever get the message.

At our meeting of the Halton Interfaith Council this month, Rabbi Wise from Shaarei-Beth El Congregation in Oakville shared that the incidence of anti-semitic attacks has risen exponentially in recent months, leaving the Jewish community very concerned about their safety and students not wanting to wear their kippahs as they were afraid it would single them out for negative attention.

1 John 4:16b tells us, "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." Not just that God teaches us about love, but that God IS love and that if we want to be in relationship with God, we have to be love also. Bishop Barron wrote on Twitter, March 7 2020, that "Loving our enemies is the best way to test the quality of our love. Love is not primarily an emotion, but an act of the will." In Matthew 5:13ff, Jesus tells his followers to be light for the world—that which illumines and clarifies the deepest truth of things—and salt for the earth—that which preserves, spices up and frees what is best in creation.² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G88rhg1W4xw> Maybe it is time for us to recheck what the wattage is on the light we are sharing and consider whether we are salt which has lost its flavour! A thought – often misquoted as coming from C.S. Lewis, but good nevertheless – tells us: "Don't shine so others can see you. Shine so that through you, others can see Him." Much as Mary always directs those who look to her towards her Son, we should do likewise.

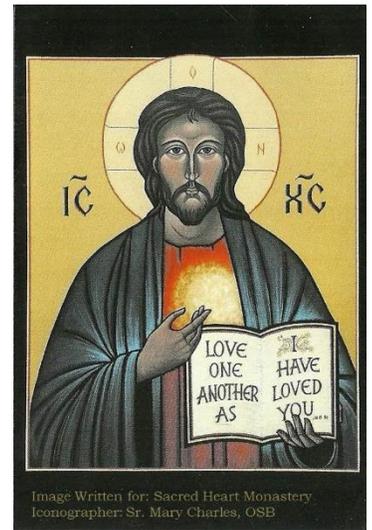


Image Written for: Sacred Heart Monastery
Iconographer: Sr. Mary Charles, OSB

¹ Image from <https://biblicalstudent.wordpress.com/2013/08/03/encountering-the-maternal-face-of-god-in-hosea-a-study-of-hosea-111-11/>

² Bishop Barron Daily Reflection for Tuesday, June 8 (italics mine)



After all the Feasts and Solemnities which have filled our days and our Sundays for the past few weeks, it feels strange to be looking to a Sunday this week which is labelled simply “The Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time” – and which will be followed by a series of similar Sundays. Just a reminder that there is nothing ‘ordinary’ or boring about these Sundays; the word Ordinary means (let’s hear it)

“counted”. This Sunday, we are reminded of the importance of allowing things to grow, especially to allow God’s hand to make this happen, and Jesus compares the potential of faith growth to the lowly mustard seed. Generally, we don’t see mustard plants which grow that large; however, the fields of gold which we may see on a drive through the country certainly do let their light shine, and provide us with a taste enhancement which many people consider as valuable as salt!



As we look forward to National Indigenous Peoples’ Day on June 21, you may find this prayer worthy of contemplation:

<p>Creator God, I come to you with a humble heart, So grateful for Your creation, this place I am in.</p> <p>The land is full of Your glory this solstice day. Sunlight sparkles on fresh green leaves. Bees buzz as trees burst into bloom.</p> <p>Even as dew collects on dandelion leaves, Or raindrops gather in boiling thunderclouds, A morning sip of lifegiving water deepens my gratitude for the life that teams across Turtle Island.</p> <p>O Creator, perfect Host, Your care and compassion were, and are, echoed in the generous hospitality of the original peoples - Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>But the reciprocal relationships of host and guest have been shattered. And the pain continues. For the death and destruction, I pour out my sorrow in lamentations.</p>	<p>It is for the sins of my own heart that I seek forgiveness. Cleanse me of the thoughts and emotions that keep those relationships from healing - wash away the toxic entitlement, prejudiced assumptions, defensive disinterest.</p> <p>O Creator, faithful Guide, Show me the path towards right relations, Shape not only my words and deeds, but even more, my reactions and thoughts.</p> <p>Open my heart to the wonder, the beauty, the gifts of the person next to me, the protestor on the news, the culture so different from my own.</p> <p>Expose my racism, Root out my deep-seated fear of change, That I may be healed within, even as I try to be part of the healing of Your world.</p> <p>Amen. https://www.kairoscanada.org/prayer-of-a-white-settler-on-national-indigenous-day-2020</p>
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With every blessing,

Gillian

