EPISTLE – 28 APRIL 2024

Dear Saints of St Columba:

A reflection from Fr Henri Nouwen:
" I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me."

- PSALM 131:2 (NIV)

Solitude Creates Space for God

To live a Christian life means to live in the world without being of it. It is in solitude that this inner freedom can grow. Jesus went to a lonely place to pray, that is, to grow in the awareness that all the power he had was given to him; that all the words he spoke came from his Father; and that all the works he did were not really his but the works of the One who had sent him. In the lonely place Jesus was made free to fail.

A Quiet Centre For God

A life without a lonely place, that is, a life without a quiet centre, easily becomes destructive. When we cling to the results of our actions as our only way of self-identification, then we become possessive and defensive and tend to look at our fellow human beings more as enemies to be kept at a distance than as friends with whom we share the gifts of life.

In Solitude We Have Space to Hear God

In solitude we can slowly unmask the illusion of our possessiveness and discover in the centre of our own self that we are not what we can conquer, but what is given to us.
In solitude we can listen to the voice of him who spoke to us before we could speak a word, who healed us before we could make any gesture to help, who set us free long before we could free others, and who loved us long before we could give love to anyone. It is in this solitude that we discover that being is more

important than having, and that we are worth more than the results of our efforts.

In solitude we discover that our life is not a possession to be defended, but a gift to be shared. It's there we recognize that the healing words we speak are not just our own but are given to us; that the love we can express is part of a greater love; and the new life we bring forth is not a property to cling to, but a gift to be received.

- Henri J. M. Nouwen

Friends, as you make space for silence may you know the blessing of solitude.

SAVE-THE-DATE

Please, please remember that we have a Jumble Sale booked for Tuesday. We would really appreciate as many folks as possible coming to help for the morning. Set up will be on Monday, and help is always appreciated there, although the busy time is Tuesday.

We have been blessed these past months with the ministry team of our Intern, Mr Alexander Marais, Mrs Urshula Ross (FoV candidate) and I. Friends, Alex is currently overseas on a work assignment for 3 weeks. This coming Sunday, Sister Urshula will be preaching.
I have been invited to St Barnabas United Church for their 50th Anniversary program.

Paula Cross and I have been regularly home-visiting members and new members alike. If you'd like to book a visit, we usually do Tuesdays, but any day Tuesday to Thursday is suitable for us. Paula has family here with her for the next few weeks but give me a call if you'd like a visit at home or coffee.

We also want to invite you to introduce a friend to the church. We can grow one person at a time.

The ministers and elders wish you a blessed week.

Rev Craig
28 April 2024