

WORDS FROM THE EDGE ON MAY 18, 2020

A year passes quickly, much quicker the older I get. Each year becomes more precious, as I become more aware of the gift, the gift of time. It is all we really have and it cannot be retrieved when it is gone. What we do with the time we have lasts a life time, however long that may be.

This season of the corona virus reminds me more and more of the importance of time and the spiritual tools that I lean on through good and difficult times. My often-neglected collection of devotional books have been a gift during this “stay home” time. The reflections and prayers have helped me slow down and savour the time I have. The books have served as prayer guides of sorts, not something to bog me down with one more thing to do to deepen my spiritual life. They remind to “pause” during the day, in the busyness or laziness or emptiness. Macrina Wiederkehr suggests pausing to simply breathe or look out the window for a moment will help guide us mindfully through the day. “No matter what you are doing, you can pause to touch the grace of the hour” (Seven Sacred Pauses 2008:2), and to embrace the gift of the moment, no matter what time or season you are in. It doesn't require much time, you can use as much time as you need to honour your pausing time.

The liturgical seasons are useful markers of time in the Christian year, and daily devotions and scripture readings help mark the changing seasons in my life. Each day I often begin with a verse of scripture, not for factual authority but in order to place me in a broader story inspired by other experiences and understandings of God. The Bible is about how people believe God impacts their lives. Thus, it is full of contradictions and confusions since it is not a literal text, but rather an inspired text. So, I find part of my story and see and feel similar pain and frustration whenever I read these ancient stories. I ask questions of the mystery of God in life and death, and I realise there are no definitive answers. Yet, as I sink into the spiritual space of meditation, I feel new life breathed into me. The Breath of Life weaves the tattered strands of my life together, and the torn pieces are reframed into a tapestry of completeness. Nothing is lost and all is made whole. When I emerge from these sacred pauses of time, I can return to the world with a sense of hope, knowing the Mystery of the unknowable is, indeed, all that matters. And that is enough, just for a moment, in the breath of one moment or the time of one day. I pray you will take advantage of the time you have and breathe or pause for prayer in the opening or closing of your days during this season of our lives.

IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning - life. And yet,
we know in the midst of life, we are always in death.
War and violence invade the time we have,
anger and hatred unleashed with weapons and violence shatter peace,
we struggle in the devastation of natural disasters, and
life is lived through chaos.
Where, then, peace?
Where, then, hope?

Some blame God for their demise:
What have I done? It must be God's will.
A God of grace and mercy does not destroy what Love has made,
human beings do that well enough on their own.
God is with us in our living and our dying,
in our beginning and our ending.
And so it is,
a new season comes, an old one goes
and peace is with us, hope comes to us,
in our beginning and our ending time.

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