

Risen Life - Turning to Face the Summons of the Future:

As we come to the end of Lent and move into the Easter Season (spanning the Sundays from Easter Day until Ascension and Pentecost), I could not think of any better 'contemplation' than 'The Expedition' from 'Wellsprings' by Anthony de Mello, written as he came to an end of a time of retreat (see page 2). I think it echoes much of what we are experiencing, as we now **'turn to face the summons of the future'** – even though our 'Lockdowns' were not planned 'Retreats'. Have any of you been on an extended spiritually focused and guided Retreat? If not I would recommend it – though I am in no way diminishing the significance of a 'Quiet Day' or even a 'Quiet Hour'; I love those times with God too!

Through Lent at church we have been considering 'The Prayers of Jesus' based on the study guide by Amy Boucher Pye. I have been struck by the number of times Jesus prayed to His Father 'Glorify Your Name' and 'Your Will Be Done'. What better 2 prayer phrases to take into this Easter Season of our lives, as it unfolds in the coming weeks!

If you'd prefer a bible passage to contemplate this Easter Season, may I suggest one of the disciples' encounters with the Risen Christ (Matt 28:16-20):-

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted.

***Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.'* (NIV)**

- What do you need to 'say goodbye' to now?
- What 'persons, places, things, events, experiences and graces' are you thankful for?
- What do you need to say 'Welcome' to and what 'other graces' do you now need for 'the summons of the future' (your personal risen life)?
- What phrase, verse, theme or particular prayer of Jesus has lived with you through Lent?
- How can you continue to keep it relevant for you through the Easter Season?
- How do you think 'The Great Commission' (Matt 28) applies to you? What do you feel about that?

A final quote from 'Wellsprings - The Surrender' by Anthony de Mello:-

***Silence cannot be induced or sought directly.
Just seek awareness – and silence will appear.***

***Surrender, let go, each time you breathe out...saying 'Yes' to God.
'Yes' to what you are today.
'Yes' to the whole of your past.
'Yes' to what lies in store for you for the future.***

***Let go, each time you breathe out with the awareness that all will be well...
And let peace take over...
For in His hands, in His will, is our peace.***

THE EXPEDITION

My retreat has come to an end,
and I think of the days that I have spent
in these surroundings.

I see an image of myself as I was when I
came here
and I look at myself as I am today
at the close of the retreat.

I think of the persons and places
that have been a part of my retreat.
To each of them I speak in gratitude
and to each I say goodbye:
other places, other persons call to me
and I must go.

I think of the experiences I have had,
the graces I have been granted
in this place.
For each of these too I am grateful.

I think of the kind of life I have lived here,
the atmosphere, the daily schedule,
I say goodbye to them:
another type of life awaits me,
other graces, other experiences.

And as I say goodbye to persons,
places,
things,
events,
experiences,
and graces,
I do so under life's imperious bidding:
if I wish to be alive
I must learn to die at every moment,
that is, to say goodbye, let go, move on.

When this is done, I turn to face the future
and I say, "Welcome."

I imagine my trip from this place tomorrow
and I say, "Welcome."

I think of the work that waits for me,
the people I shall meet,
the type of life I shall be living,
the events that will take place tomorrow.
And I extend my arms in welcome
to the summons of the future.

Wellsprings - Anthony de Mello