

Prayer 6 : What really matters is to love

LOVE
is
what really
matters

To begin

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Centre yourself now in silence. Take five deep breaths in and out. Allow your mind to become a little quieter. Put everything except this prayer away from you. Give yourself a few minutes of stillness to calm yourself before you begin. Become aware of God's Spirit with you inspiring you in your prayer.

My prayer today

Today, I'm praying for my parents/grandparents/aunts/uncles, anyone basically who is older than me! I'm praying for people whose health isn't so good and so are extra especially worried at the moment.

Lord, I'm taking myself out of the centre of my universe for a moment and putting these special people that I love into the centre instead. I reflect for a moment on these thought provoking words written so recently by Brother Richard Hendrick OFM

Lockdown

Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,

keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that

Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing
.



This is an image (see above) that speaks of solidarity.

In these days of physical distancing, it's not as simple as it was to show solidarity. What does solidarity look like now?

When you look at this image, reflect on the ways in which others are showing you solidarity, and supporting you. How are your teachers/students/family/friends reaching out? Allow yourself to feel gratitude for that love others have for you.

Reflect for a moment on how you can show solidarity to others. At the moment the most important way of being in solidarity with others – particularly the most vulnerable – is by remaining apart from them. Reflect on how you can connect with them in other ways.

Take this moment, to name those who need your love and care at the moment and reach out to them in prayer. Remember after your prayer to call them or to email them, if you can, to let them know you were praying for them. If you can't that's okay too.

A word from scripture

1 John 4: 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them

To conclude

Pray these or words of your own in response to today's prayer.

- God, you are Love. Anywhere I see or experience love, I know that I am seeing and experiencing you. Help me always to be open to recognise you in what is happening around me; in the care I give and the care I receive.
- God, you are compassion. May I show compassion to others by remaining on my own and following the directions given to me by health authorities. The greatest act of love in this situation, the way I can protect those who are weaker or older or more vulnerable is by following these instructions. This is my way of being compassionate. Help me to reach out in other ways.
- God, you are patience. Teach me to see these days as a marathon not a sprint. Help me not to get too stressed or anxious. Lead me in the path of truth and all that is good.

Conclude by saying slowly the Our Father.... .. and by blessing yourself, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.