

RESOURCING OURSELVES / RESOURCING OTHERS

Continuing Ministerial Development

Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane

18 March 2020

Live streaming worship

'Coronavirus doesn't need to stop the mission of the church .. and, with technology, all you need now is a smartphone and an internet connection to keep church running even when people are at home. ... At the end of the day, we ARE the church, whether we meet in person or via the internet. Facebook live is one of the easiest ways to run a Sunday service remotely and its free!'

Source: PremierChristianity.com

3 minute guide to livestreaming YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhnR0hahkD0&fbclid=IwAR39NRhUxZul2aWD39aXILEzhGPG534cAf66sSlS8wDDfsYCR6zwd7yWtk>

Source: St Paul's Cathedral, San Diego

Film Clips

The Work of the People (theworkofthepeople.com) offers a range of inspiring film and video resources some of which could be used for online worship or for personal reflection. The Psalms of Lament are particularly apt at this time. See the film which places Ps 130 'Out of the depths' against the backdrop of Hurricane Katrina or Ps 17 which cries to God for justice for those who suffer innocently.

Prayers

Psalm 130

Empty, exhausted and ravaged
In the depths of despair I writhe.
Anguished and afflicted, terribly alone,
I trudge a bleak wasteland, devoid of all love.

In the echoing abyss I call out:
No God of compassion hears my voice.
Yet still I pray, Open your heart,
For my tears well up within me.

*The litany of lament grows loud and long:
The pulse of faith grows weak.*

Drawn from the murky depths by a fish hook,
I shout to the air that will kill me:
Must I leave behind all that I cherish
Before I can truly breathe free?

Suspended between one world and the next,
I waited for you, my God.
Apprehension and hope struggled within me,
I waited, I longed for your word.

*The litany of lament grows loud and long:
The pulse of faith grows weak.*

As the night watch waits for the morning,
Through the darkest and coldest of seasons,
More even than those who peer through the
gloom
I hope for the dawn, I yearn for the light.

Touching and healing the whole of my being
You are a God whose reach has no limit.
All that has been lost will one day be found:
The communion of the rescued will rejoice in
your name.

*The litany of lament grows loud and long:
The pulse of faith grows stronger once more.*

Source: Jim Cotter

God, when things get weird
we want to rein it in
When we're dragged beyond our ken
we scabble to restore order
But you just keep on wreaking havoc
in the order we try to maintain
until we encounter something
that's simply beyond us.
We'll still have a go
at shoe horning anomalies
into our ready made moulds
And we'll exhaust
and frustrate ourselves
in the process
And you stand back
not because you don't care

but because you care deeply
and you know us so well
You know that the only way
we'll turn to you
is when we have exhausted
all of our resources
And even then,
we'll have a go at you
railing at injustice
questioning your omnipotence
And still you wait
to gather us up
and soothe us
You sit with us
as we grieve our loss of control
You support us
as we seek to centre ourselves
You strengthen us
as we discover new ways
to be disciples
who listen
to your beloved Son
God may we be fast learners
so that we can lead others
into your light and love this day.

Source: Liz Crumlish, Path of Renewal

Reflections

Many things have been cancelled because of the coronavirus. Love is not one of them.

Source: America Magazine

In the light of all that is happening around us we are faced with a choice: to live this time in grudge or to live this time in grace. *Source: Anon*

'And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed

new images and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they has been healed.'

Source: Kitty O'Meara

Lockdown

Yes there is fear.
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 ...
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.

Source: Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM

Theological Reflection

'Panic and fear are not from God. Calm and hope are. It is possible to respond to a crisis seriously and deliberately while maintaining an inner sense of calm and hope. St. Ignatius Loyola talked about two forces in our interior lives: one that draws us toward God and the other away from God. The one that draws us away from God, which he labeled the evil spirit, "causes gnawing anxiety, saddens and sets up obstacles. In this way it unsettles people by false reasons aimed at preventing their progress." Sound familiar? Don't lend credence to lies or rumors, or give in to panic. Trust what medical experts tell you, not those who fear monger. There is a reason they call Satan the "Prince of Lies."

Panic, by confusing and frightening you, pulls you away from the help God wants to give you. It is not coming from God. What *is* coming from God? St. Ignatius tells us: God's spirit "stirs up courage and strength, consolations, inspirations and tranquillity." So trust in the calm and hope you feel. That is the voice to listen to. "Do not be afraid!," as Jesus said many times.

Source: James Martin SJ America Magazine

Book Suggestion

Serene Jones, (2009). *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World*. Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Despite the off-putting title, this is theological reflection at its most rooted, earthy and raw. Jones brings the rigour of a professor of systematic theologian (Union Theological Seminary, NY) and the groundedness of a disciple immersed in the life of her local community. But

unlike many who shoehorn experience to fit what they have learned in the academy, Jones puts received wisdom - theological and psychological - under the microscope and examines its missiological telos. With great clarity Jones engages trauma theory and the life of grace in dialogue and highlights the therapeutic dimension of worship in which people come to recognize their own stories 'here and now' in the ancient stories they read and hear of ages past. Thus 'redemptive community emerges in the space of proclamation' (p.79). In one instance she describes how a self-defence class she was running for women who had experienced domestic abuse was just ending as a Holy Week service recounting the passion of Christ was about to begin within the church centre. Seizing the moment she invited the women in the self-help group to join in. In deeply moving terms she recalls the tears shed by those who knew from the inside the pain and the passion being proclaimed to them and how, for the first time in their lives, they found themselves (literally) incorporated into a violent drama with a positive and redemptive ending.

In another example she persuaded a women's group to study Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms. But this was no midweek ladies fellowship. Rather the purpose of the meeting was to support a young woman who had witnessed a fatal drive-by shooting. Following Calvin she helped the group discover within the texts of the psalms 'a world that collective social violence had knocked out of kilter' and invited them 'into plays of mind and vistas of faithful imagination that would offer them hope and healing' p 49.

If, as Jones suggests, trauma robs us of the 'resources of language, imagination and creativity' (p.101) then this book is certainly an exception. As a bridge between systematic and practical theology it is exemplary. To those whose first language is theology it makes trauma theory highly accessible. To those engaged in healing therapies it opens the door to reframing human experiences within the Christian narrative. To those drawn to theological literature it offers a model of theological writing which is capable of feeding both heart and mind without being too pious for the academy nor too academic for the church.

Reviewed by Michael Paterson