

## Week beginning 17th May Trust that all is harvest

A fairly common cause for our more sombre moods often springs from regrets about lost opportunities, about decades we waste on trivial pursuits, or energy whittled away during careless years, with nothing to show for them, no trace of anything lasting. Whether we now see ourselves as victims of either workaholism or laziness, few escape the often-searing regrets and bitter feelings about what is, with hindsight, perceived as futility or pointlessness. Those wasted years, those crazy choices, those costly mistakes, all that useless effort! Either way, especially during certain decades of our lives, most of us are prone to reflect, at some level of intensity, about how much we have achieved at both a professional and a personal level . . .

Endemic to every human heart is a spark of infinity, a hint of the divine, a small mystic who has designs on eternity. In some, this spark has almost gone out; in others it burns with a fierce intensity that carries a permanent ache. The more attuned to beauty we become, the more the longing increases. The late Cardinal Hume quoted George Herbert's poem, *The Pulley God*, which explains the necessary place of 'restlessness' in the human heart. The only gift withheld from creatures is that of 'the comfort of rest':

For if I should, said He,  
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,  
he would adore my gifts instead of me,  
And rest in Nature, not in the God of Nature:  
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep all else,  
But keep them with repining restlessness;  
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,  
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness  
May toss him to my breast.

My heart goes out to folk who are in despair at the perceived failure of their lives. I think it is a desperately sad thing to happen to anybody. I want to hold them close and fill them with hope; tell them of the wonder of their lives; how they have all unknowingly, changed the world; how one day, the love they have incarnated in the lives of others will be their shining selves in heaven forever. This reflection flows like a balm over the tormented soul. This is how I understand it. Through the incarnation of God in human form, everything, except deliberately chosen lovelessness, is sanctified. There is nothing that is not saved, no blade of grass without God's signature; nothing that is neutral, valueless or bad. . . When Jesus descended into hell, even sin was redeemed and made potentially redemptive. Darkness is no longer threatening; death no longer has any real power; nothing goes waste; to live, to breathe, to be, to have a heart that beats, is already to be pulsing with divine energy; all is harvest. (*Travelling Light pp97,98,99*)

**Follow-up - If you would like to explore mindful meditation, try this simple daily praxis:**

Earlier, we blessed ourselves, on the head, heart and shoulders, with the Sign of the Cross. Today we touch ourselves again, believing in the healing and anointing power that we all carry by virtue of our humanity and of our Christianity. Jesus was always touching people. Each morning I place my cupped hands over my eyes, the thumbs either side of my nose, for a short while, and then over my ears. I believe in the wholesome energy I carry as a child of God. I then place my hands on my neck, and over my clothes on my shoulders, on my throat, on my heart, across my ribs, on my lower stomach and on my bare feet. I breathe easily. It only takes a few minutes. While I'm doing this, I pray for the unblocking within me of the channels of physical and emotional energy. I do it mindfully, prayerfully and gently. . .

The prayerful anointing that I'm suggesting is invigorating for both body and soul. And so, at meditation today, maybe you could enter into the possibility of a deep transcendence in your way of looking at the mystery of life, and who you think you are within it. Place your hands on your body as I have described. Do it with total conviction. End your prayer with an act of trust in God's dream for you – the abundant life, the emerging beauty of your hidden self, the carefreeness of the birds of the air. (*Travelling Light p100*)