

A Lenten Reflection for the soul searching for God's love

Topic: We are Spiritual Garden Sheds for God

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Isn't it depressing when people today, still perceive LENT as a time reminiscent of childhood of living in fear of 'Hell fire and damnation.' The thought of not making some small sacrifice for one's soul by doing public penance such as not having chocolate, etc. would incur the strap from the Mother Superior or the Christian Brothers. Those were the days my friend when we thought they would never, ever end!

I guess I must have lost the plot many years ago when I decided instead of going without my goodies (ice cream, etc.) instead, I would do something more appealing like going the extra mile and be nice to that awful neighbor who refused to be civil and polite. So, rather than do without, I would try making an effort to disarm my enemies with love and tolerance by showing them one of Father Ted's awesome smiles! No wonder there was climate change! HA!

Lent should be seen not as punitive season where we should go around draped in sackcloth and sadness, looking proper miserable with hunger pangs wakening the dead! Instead, I believe that the period of Lent should be seen as a gift whereby we are offered a golden opportunity to re-evaluate 'Who and What We Are as a precious child of Source.' In other words, I personally see the 40 days of Lent as a 'valued gift' of self surrender of one's heart to God.

In a recent conversation with our Mother Abbess of the Tau Community of St. Francis, the topic of conversation centered round the different ways which our Brothers and Sisters could assist with the manifestation of our 'Abbey of Saint Francis of Peace and Compassion' from the ethereal realms of Light. We were reminded by Mother Olivea that as we each hold God's presence within our homes as active members of the Tau Community. Our homes are perceived as God's garden sheds wherein dwells the presence of God's healing Love and Light. One could say that as we embrace our soul's longing for personal intimacy with the energies of the Cosmic Christ, the Divine Feminine, Mother Mary, Quan Yin, Gaia with the host of Angels, saints and the 'Ancient Ones of Truth. Their very presence empowers

our heart to surrender to God's plan for our daily lives and embrace our availability and vulnerability as a spiritual community in service to Source.

There is a beautiful quote in the Old Testament Psalms which says; '**As the deer longs for running water, so my soul longs for you my God.**' If we are true to our heart having surrendered everything to God, then we know intuitively that we shall see the 'Face of God.' The role of our spiritual garden shed, or that special place where we come into the Presence of God within our home, allows us to come as we are with a sense of 'inner knowingness' that we will be welcomed and not rejected by our loving Father Mother God as others would have us believe. Here I was made aware by Jesus speaking clearly to my heart that for many years I believed I was the Prodigal Son. In fact, I was made aware that my harboring envious and spiteful thoughts about others made me the Prodigal Son's brother! Here, we really must be aware of how deceived we can become when we nurture feelings of self loathing, a lack of forgiveness to those who malign our so called good name (ego) at best.

Let's briefly reflect for a moment about the role of the garden shed and its importance for active gardeners. Our garden shed is no different to that of our spiritual garden where each spends time there quietly reflecting on the Gardener's Year Book for better ideas on how to improve our allotment. The gardening shed is also a safe place where one stores one's gardening equipment from fear of theft, etc. Besides, where better to relax with like minded friends and gardening pals over a warm drink than that found in one's own potting or gardening shed.

In terms of our shed being a spiritual garden oasis or base wherein we can rest awhile in God's presence, the purpose of it will create a prayer chest or safe place for personal intimacy with one's God - a safe haven where the heart is allowed to grow in the knowledge that it is loved unconditionally, regardless of past mistakes.

Remember: every Saint has a past and every sinner has a future!

As with the shed in our garden, a committed soul seeker of truth will soon rediscover that by having such a treasured resource as one's own spiritual garden shed, the soul is offered God's love and warmth from the elements. If left unattended, one can become exposed to damp conditions (the trials of life) where

the pressures from a consumer driven society will eventually take its toll and eventually erode one's inner peace. If like the gardener on his allotment, we make time to do a little 'Spring clean' with the sole aim of having a 'bumper crop in the following year, then we know that neglect or the failure to provide the essential care of our gardening tools, such as fork, spade for digging or a lawn mower for cutting the grass, then we may well encounter many difficulties when we come to scrape off this year's unused soil and debris. So it is with our living soul. If we fail to heed what the heart is saying to us today, not tomorrow; then we will be driven underground through ignorance. The gardener who takes a gamble and forfeits the need to take care of his gardening equipment will run the serious risk of damaging new growth through willful negligence. Blunt secateurs will not prune but destroy a healthy plant! As for our soul, there can be no excuse when we are prompted by God's Spirit to make the required changes for our soul's spiritual growth. If we do take chances, then we will compromise our integrity at the expense of jeopardizing our personal relationship we have with God. It is my firm belief, based on my many years of trying to live my live life without surrendering my heart because of my ego, I came to live a meaningless existence infused more with religious piety than being sensitive to what God's plans were for my life. My innate reluctance to hand over control of my life to God for fear of losing my life, was proven to be a misguided notion not based on God's truth for my life but more to do with my unwillingness to surrender freely my heart back to the ne who created me in love to experience LOVE. I know only too well from my painful costs that my inappropriate decisions almost severed my spiritual umbilical cord to God's love. Not the other way round! So, instead of God abandoning Brother Sean, it was Brother Sean who abandoned God through pure stubbornness of heart! At sixt one years of age, it is never to late to learn from one's past or present mistakes. All it takes is a little humility to acknowledge that 'pride always comes before the inevitable fall from grace.'

As members of the Tau Community of Saint Francis, our homes are our spiritual potting or garden shed for God. Holding the vision of the Abbey of Saint Francis in the ethereal realms will greatly benefit from the love which is being generated from the numerous spiritual garden sheds connecting all our members and Friends who are associated either directly or indirectly with the Tau monastic family. The

secret rests not with what we can do but more what God can and will do through our letting go of self and abandoning the 'Me Culture' which is eating away at the very heart of society today. Presently our members who now live as either Monastic's or Oblates are part of our online monastic community where we each live a simple spiritual life to our chosen 'Tau Rule of Life' which best suits our respective needs. Though many are geographically dispersed across the world, we are very much connected through God's umbilical cord from the moment we surrender our hearts to freedom when we join the Tau family. When we hand over our ego driven lives instead of forfeiting our liberation and freedom, we in fact become spiritually rich unlike many who have material wealth who are spiritually impoverished through their own choice. The moment God's Spirit touches the heart to make a positive response to live in the world but not be a part of its trappings, etc., our detachment from the 'Me culture' will empower our heart to embrace the Natural World- the Franciscan Soul of Simplicity, When we enter this spiritual pathway we actually become co heirs with the Cosmic Christ as co creators of Source.

Many of us will have tasted the delights of living in a materialistically consumed society where we have craved for a particular object and once in our possession, we soon discover that it has lost its power and influence. Then along comes the next challenge which will begin the whole cycle of 'I want and I will have culture.' Is it worth the pain and sacrifice? Have you ever walked down London's famous Oxford Street during the rush hour? What were your observations? Why are so many people looking utterly miserable and glum? Could it be that they, too, are searching for what we have already? Could the reason be caused by their unwillingness to let go, or maybe, could the real reason be that don't know what it is they are searching for? So, why compromise our spiritual intelligence for the sake of riches which we know doesn't last, or at best, we cannot take them into the next life.....So, the lesson we must learn is that we should be aware of the impact of consumerism and it's ploys to distract the soul from seeking God's running water of eternal life. To be taken over by its ridiculous ploys is to jeopardize our son ship and daughter ship as God's sacred vessels. I believe that we who have received much will have to render an account of our spiritual and material investments which God entrusted to us as designated custodians of the Divine Truth.

When we remain loyal to God's Promises and persistently face whatever life throws at us but yet remain loyal and steadfast then when we cry out to God from our dwelling place or spiritual garden sheds! It is then that our voice will be heard and God's miracles and blessings will be shared equally and benevolently to those who seek first the Kingdom of God.

Nurturing Divine love from selfless hearts which have surrendered totally to the Divine will create vortexes of pure love for the benefit not just of all peoples but will have a direct positive influence upon the eco systems and animal kingdoms who still are living in fear of humankind.

Today, as we prepare for the period of Lent, instead of going around looking glum and all religious in our dress sense, let us take out our best cloths and have a party with God where in our availability and vulnerability we come to recognize that we really don't have to lift a finger to please God but just BE!

This is what I perceive as being ready for the 40 days of Lent- allowing God change the negative thought patterns using the 8000 year old ancient teachings of the Essene communities who were given the sacred tools to create a positive mind set to liberate the soul for God-for society-for the whole world- for the betterment of past, present and future civilizations.

Lent can be an ideal opportunity to discern more about God's plan for one's life instead of playing 'doormat' to those who use us as their 'whipping boy.' So, what gifts can I offer your heart as the 40 days of Lent approaches?

So why wait until the January Sales of 2011 to buy those state of the art sacred gardening gloves and utensils? Sometime ago, there was a famous TV show host who would say to his contestants who were keen to play the games, 'Come on Down.' Are you willing to come on down off your horse and enjoy eating not hay, but the spoils of Divine Love from God's spiritual Abundance?

Please see the following dates which I have set aside to walk with anyone interested in exploring 'Childlike Simplicity' as seen through the eyes of Saint Francis and St Therese of Lizieux.

A series of heart centered informal spiritual seminars / retreats, empowering the heart embrace the Natural World -the Franciscan Soul of Childlike Simplicity during Lent 2010.

Based on the Tau Community's Way to Spiritual Wholeness through Love and Childlike Simplicity.....

Retreat Facilitator:

Brother Sean TCOSF

Dates	Retreat Seminar topics
Sat: 20th Feb'10	The role of Childlike Simplicity in Divine Service
Sat: 27th Feb'10	Integrity of the heart.
Sat: 13 March'10	Faith is a gift- but what is it?
Sat:20 March '10	Gratitude-the gift of the heart to Source
Sat: 27 March '10	Surrender of the heart in service to Source
Good Friday 2nd April 2010	Divine Providence is Spiritual Abundance

Retreat Costs: £35.00 per day- includes homemade soup and Refreshments

Arrive for 10am ready to start seminar-retreat at: 10.30am –End: 4pm

Book early to avoid disappointment as places are limited.

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