

Subject: Daily Prayer 1st May 2020 with reflection by Canon Simon Stephens

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Dear everyone

This prayer came through from the environmental team yesterday and I felt that it just had to be shared.....

A Prayer by Jill Duffield

The earth is yours, Lord, and everything in it. You make us stewards, entrusted to care for creation, ready always to give you an accounting of how we nurtured and tended that which belongs to you. In your generosity and compassion, you give us sunsets awash in color, rivers gurgling over rocks, fireflies that glow in formation and crows that recognize human faces. The diversity, complexity and beauty of the earth stuns and sustains us. While we shelter in place, the blooming dogwood provides relief from hopelessness and the returning pair of cardinals reminds us to give thanks for the present moment. As the skies clear and the dolphins return and the wildlife reclaim the woods, we lament the ways we damage the good you made, defy your command to be caretakers and abuse your beloved world. May we learn well the lessons this quarantine has taught us, so that when we return to our travel, our work places, our schools, our unencumbered comings and goings, our capitalism and consumption, we will do so mindful of their impact on creation and ready to change our ways so that all your earth can flourish. Amen.

John 14:1-14

Jesus the Way to the Father

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

Reflection from Canon Simon Stephens

The Feast of SS Philip and James, Apostles
John 14/vs 1 - 14 Jesus comforts the Apostles.

Good Morning, today the Universal Church of God celebrates the Feast Day of the Apostles, Philip and James ; and in so doing, we are invited to honour all those friends and family members who rejoice in those names. When you have completed your personal prayers and devotions, may I suggest that via the blessing of the Internet, you send a note of congratulations and good wishes to all those men whom you know who bear those names.

There can be little doubt that most of us reading this morning's lesson, know much of John 14/vs 1-4 by heart. We will have heard it read at countless funerals ; and during these Pandemic Days, the words of Jesus, as recorded by John will have been a source of comfort and inspiration to millions of Christians across the world. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house, there are many rooms!" As we all know from personal experience, partings are painful, and in this morning's Gospel the Man from Galilee is seeking to bring comfort to the Disciples before his final Ascension into Heaven. They are promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, but Jesus recognises that they are struggling with their emotions, with their faith in him. Crucifixion is followed by resurrection ; and the disciples were recalling not only the significance of the Upper Room and the Emmaus Road, but the countless times that Jesus had walked with them. They found it so very difficult to grasp the truth, that he must leave them again, if they are to be blessed by the Holy Spirit.

Please read and reread this passage ; and ask God to speak to you through John' words. And if you know of any friend or neighbour who is struggling with life at the present time - please share John 14/1-4 with them.

Thank you Father Simon

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Deep peace I breathe into you,
O weariness, here:
O ache, here!
Deep peace, a soft white dove to You;
Deep peace, a quiet rain to you;
Deep peace, an ebbing wave to you!
Deep peace, red wind of the east from you;
Deep peace, grey wind of the west to You;
Deep peace, dark wind of the north from you;
Deep peace, blue wind of the south to you!
Deep peace, pure red of the flame to you;
Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you;
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;
Deep peace, pure grey of the dew to you,
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you!

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the sleeping stones to you!
Deep peace of the Yellow Shepherd to you,
Deep peace of the Wandering Shepherdess to you,
Deep peace of the Flock of Stars to you,
Deep peace from the Son of Peace to you,
Deep peace from the heart of Mary to you,
And from Briget of the Mantle
Deep peace, deep peace!
And with the kindness too of the Haughty Father
Peace!
In the name of the Three who are One,
Peace! And by the will of the King of the Elements,
Peace! Peace!

(From "The Dominion of Dreams. Under the Dark Star
by Fiona Macleod (William Sharp, 1895))

Blessings until tomorrow - V