

Friday Grind



Signing 'Peace Be With You'.

When inside a building and masked we can SIGN - - -



"Keep on keeping on"! Enjoy nature.



When we hold our suffering in a way that opens us to greater compassion, heartbreak becomes a source of healing, deepening our empathy for others who suffer and extending our ability to reach out to them.
~ Parker Palmer

Not long ago I received a tender letter from someone whose heartbreak eventually led to becoming a source of compassion for others. When I looked at the return address on the envelope, I did not recognize the name. Upon reading the letter, I found a profoundly compassionate message. A young man who had been in spiritual guidance with a dear friend of mine sent a birthday card to me. He knew this would be the first year I'd not receive one from her

because she had recently died from brain cancer.

His sending the card was remarkable, but the story of what preceded this action makes it even more touching. As a teenager, this young man was the first to find the body of his father when he took his life. This traumatic loss led the teenager to a retreat given by my friend. So began a developing relationship to help him heal from his grim experience. Along with this gift came an ability to enter into the suffering of others.



When I finished reading the letter, I thought, "This gashing experience of suffering broke open the young man's heart. Compassion

has come pouring forth. He could have chosen to stay with his sadness, to close in on himself. Instead, he opened up to receive and act upon God's grace, moving to comfort others in their sufferings. And I am one of the fortunate recipients of this decision to not let sorrow suffocate his love."

When painful experiences happen, there's always a choice in how to respond. Some people choose to slam their heart's door shut, tightly containing bitterness, self-orientation, blame, and caustic anger. Others let their hearts break open, becoming a fountain of empathy and compassion with ever-growing love spilling out.

Our hurting world presents us with similar options, whether the distressing events we experience are related to Covid-19, racism, food insecurity, political strife, or the great divide between the haves and have nots. How we respond will decide whether our hearts build a brick wall around them or if they widen to give actual credence to the maxim that "we are all in this together." May we choose each day to have expansive hearts.

Great Ocean of Love, help us turn the tide toward global compassion. Move through minds and hearts caught in the choking seaweeds of indifference and selfishness. Wash out to sea discrimination and systemic racism, ignorance, hatred and bigotry. Let all of this dissolve in your vast waters of transforming love. Your indwelling presence is much stronger than the moon's energy urging the sea back and forth. Inspire us to use



our energy to overcome what causes division and inequality among humankind. Let us not lose heart.



July 12, 2020 Readings
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Year A
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Proper 10)



Lectionary Readings 'options'
Genesis 25:19-34 with Psalm 119:105-112 or
Isaiah 55:10-13 with Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13
Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23



