

To 'listen prayerfully to one's own struggles and joys'.

Biblical text for meditation: Lk 19: 1 - 10

It is very ordinary for every human person to experience emotional tendencies either of joy, happiness, fulfillment and success, or sorrow, pains, failure, struggles, confusion, hurt, brokenness, desperation and frustration. This is because, life is never a smooth sailing. The realities of our human existence are woven with moments of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. We take some time to determine and locate the physical pain, just as we take some time to analyze the origin of the struggles which befall us and to understand the motive causes of these struggles.

Therefore, in our attempt to search for relieve, we do sometimes talk about some of these emotional feelings to whom we think or consider can offer us great help. On the contrary too, for the sake of preserving our dignity, we keep them to ourselves. Do we not sometimes hear some friends, family members or colleagues share with us having some physical uneasiness (headaches, toothaches, body pains, sleeplessness or other unpleasant physical issues) or paddling through certain personal trials and setbacks? Thus "when we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand"

In the same manner, on our different vocation journeys, to 'listen prayerfully to one's own struggles and joys' is an invitation to choose "to open more intentionally to God" and to claim our belovedness in God. Having this inner conviction to keep our mind and heart focused on discerning the traces of God's presence in the midst of our struggles, personal trials and joys, becomes an anchor which keep us erect on our feet. This is because learning to have time "to rest in God's presence and simply listen", permits us first and foremost to 'face our own passion drives, dreams, compulsions and illusions'.

Undoubtedly, when we are caught in the web of our own conceived ideas, thoughts, desires, compulsions and illusions, and experience social pressure and the desire therefore to seek approval from others, "tempt us to display an image of ourselves that we hope will be more acceptable". By treading this path of social approval and be considered being relevant, we are plunged, rather, into a tunnel of "spiritual desolation, [feeling of] no sense of God's closeness and love... a heavy movement of the heart (sadness, discouragement, hopelessness, anxiety...) such darkness of soul, disturbance in it, movement to low and earthly things, disquiet from various agitations and temptations, moving to lack confidence, without hope, without love, [in short] finding oneself totally slothful, tepid, sad, and as if separated from one's Creator and Lord". Even though it is normal human reality, the awareness of this emotional "feeling far from God" and the willingness to reject it, that "we are set free from harm and set free to grow in the vocation that God has given us"

In addition, this personalized spiritual exercise emboldens us to come to terms with our personalities and actions, look at our own lives and courageously, therefore, ask this salient question "Is there a still point where my life is anchored with hope and courage and confidence?" In a nutshell, the purpose of this spiritual discernment of listening prayerfully to one's own struggles and joys is to open up to the "healing gift of Christ's love for all humanity".

Furthermore, encountering the “healing gift of Christ’s love” in one’s own life struggles and joys, makes great difference in our lives. Acknowledging the healing love of Christ is the condition of discipleship which opens our inner promptings, excites our thirst and quest for our true identity in God. Thus to know the purpose for “what God has created you to be”. Also, prayerful listening to whatever emotional tendencies we may have and believe that it is a sacred space to encounter the love of God, because we remind ourselves as His beloved sons and daughters, ‘stimulate definitely change in our habitual ways of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting’.

As a result, claiming our belovedness ‘make better sense of our thoughts and we find greater meaning of our lives’. This is because “it is this belovedness that motivates and marks us ...Being the beloved expresses the core truth of our existence”.

During this moment of Eucharistic adoration, can I also listen prayerfully to all that I have to deal with as struggles and joys? Can I surrender to the abiding presence of the Lord and invite the Holy Spirit into my life in order to stimulate my inner and unspoken intentions, desires, dreams, joys, sorrows, struggles, confusions and pain so that the loving Spirit of God adds deeper dimensions to my life?