

Meditation

February 1st 2022

We do not stand alone.

*'Praise the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
Oh my soul, praise Him for He is my strength and salvation;
all ye who hear,
brothers and sisters draw near,
praise Him in glad adoration.'*

I have experienced such shared, heartfelt joy and adoration in recent worship. Singing and listening to the words and music as part of our congregation, has been wonderful. It has prompted me to reflect on why that is and what it means to me and others. In doing so I have been beautifully reminded of other occasions in various places and with far away congregations. I found I was reliving the power and strength of the connection to each other, as we worshipped.

I see again those places, built collectively with a common purpose. I am so thankful to be embraced in that act of adoration. I have been so enriched in my faith by being part of the worship we share in the prayers, liturgy and music offered. Grateful in receiving God's blessing on our common witness.

Religion: 're' - again, and 'ligious' - connection.

Religion is meant to offer us support to connect again. A fullness. A whole. We know it's been misused by people and churches, and consequently, a cause for separation and dislocation.

Churches narrowed, from full people vision, to an almost total preoccupation with their devotional needs.

Gross individualism has also developed into a private enlightenment journey – each using *religion* as a commodity.

Our goal should be to achieve a community of saints. To live as a family, the Kingdom – here.

To live the Gospel, we need each other.

Becoming who we really are, is a matter of learning how to become more and more deeply connected.

R. Rohr, Franciscan, reminds us, 'God is love which means a relationship itself.'

How does that look and feel? Catholic writer, *Judy Cannato*, suggests that, 'In receiving God's love you can also receive love from others'.

All life is interrelated. Whatever effects one, directly effects the other. Wind, weather and woes....

'As we develop that dynamic, imprinted when we were created as Christians,' Pope Francis believed, 'we then go out from ourselves to live in communion with God, others and all creatures.'

God set the cornerstone for our faith and thereby our lives.

God needs 'living stones'

Peter 2:5

Jesus' teachings of forgiveness, healing and justice are not a test but basic requirements for a shared life. These elements express the heart of God – a truth shared with us, in Jesus Christ, who is reconciling all people to God.

2 Corinth. 5:18 -

The Trinity, God, Christ with the Holy Spirit, is a relationship. A living power, overflowing with love and strength. Our example and our means.

Jesus proclaims that we are His body. The Body of Christ is a collective reality. 'The body is a unit that is made up of many parts'....'so it is with Christ, for we are all baptised by one Spirit into one body'...'now you are the Body of Christ and each of you is part of it'.

1 Corinth. 12: 12-26

We take Christ's body in the bread of communion, to share His risen life.

'May they all be one'....'so that the world may believe it was You who sent me, that they maybe one as we are one, with me in them and You in me,'

John 17:21-23

Paul believed that small communities of Jesus's followers would make the Gospel message believable.

All around the world, coming together, sharing resources, seeking an alternative future, as many are doing, has been one of the spiritual gifts of the pandemic. Foundational love gives us hope to work together to bring more life, love and meaning out of chaos and death.

We sing: 'Praise the Lord'. May we reflect God's glory in our lives and actions.

We do not stand alone.

Amen

I give credit to *Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation*. His topic in this new year is '*Everyone belongs*'. His thoughtful meditations supported my struggle to sort out my own thoughts and feelings.