

# Making Space for God

## Opening Prayer

I remember my affliction and wandering, the bitterness and gall.

I well remember them and my soul is downcast within me.

Yet this I call to mind and therefore have hope:

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

**Arrival**- Take some times to settle yourself. Invite the Lord to guide and direct your thoughts for the day. Think back over where you have been in the last eight weeks. What burdens, emotions, and concerns do you carry? What are you thankful for? When have you experienced the Lord's presence? Journal your thoughts and offer these to the Lord.

## Scripture Study - New Beginnings

September is a month of beginnings for those of us whose lives are shaped by the academic year. New students, new work, and new partners await us. September is also the beginning of the fall season with shorter days and cooler nights. In the scriptures, mornings are the preeminent image of new beginnings in human experience. Morning is a time when journeys begin (Genesis 21:14; 24:54; 26:31). It was a time of prayer (Psalm 5:3; 88:13; Mark 1:35), worship (1 Samuel 1:19) and sacrifice (2 Kings 16:15). Morning is a time to be aware of God's perpetual love and goodness. It is a time for humans to encounter God and affirm that he is indispensable to their lives.

As you begin your journey with God into this new school year, take some to reflect upon the metaphor of morning. What do you hope will happen in your life with him? What do you hope will happen in your life with those closest to you? What do you hope will happen with those you serve? What daily habits will help you to remember who God is? What will help you to remember who you are? What do you dread about this year? Tell those things to Jesus. Conclude by reading Isaiah 43:1-13

**Exercise and Rest**- Take some time to walk around and enjoy the area around the library. It is his gift to you today.



*Dawn at Campus by the Sea*

## *Reading for Reflection*

Progress in the spiritual life commences when a person abandons a life build on mindless extroversion or on blind obedience to instincts and unconscious mind-sets. Instead the seeker after God begins to take notice of the promptings of conscience and the first stirrings of spiritual desire...A certain amount of drama is necessary to help us make the transition from a comfortable, easygoing, and relatively mindless existence to a careful, industrious, zealous, and even fervent life.

*Michael Casey in Living in the Truth, page 71*

The spiritual life is not a hobby or a part-time occupation. It is nothing if it does not find expression in everything we do. There is no possibility of moonlighting: using some of our energies for other goals or for ourselves. Taking the spiritual life seriously means that it is not compartmentalized. It is a total obsession. There are no vacations. There are no areas which can be insulated from its guidance. Dabbling in spiritual life is futile; the specific advantages of religious practice follow only when there is unqualified commitment.

*Michael Casey in Living in the Truth, page 62*

In times of prosperity, spirituality stagnates. It is only in the context of the harrowing experiences of deconstruction that forward movement is initiated...We do not find God when the going is good. The sense of well-being that is generated by positive experience makes us somewhat self-sufficient. At least it tends to limit our horizons to the range of possibilities available to us in the present world. We become insensitive to other-worldly realities. We forget God.

*Michael Casey in Living in the Truth, page 61*

Augustine said that you have to start your relationship with God all over from the beginning, every day. Yesterday's faith does not wait for you like a dog with your slippers and the morning paper in its mouth. You seek it, and in seeking it, you find it. During the Renaissance Fra Giovanni Giocondo wrote:

*No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take heaven!*

*No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take peace!*

*Anne Lamott in Plan B, Further Thoughts on Faith, page 258*

Action without reflection can easily become barren and even bitter. Without the space for self examination and the capacity for rejuvenation, the danger of exhaustion and despair is too great. Contemplation confronts us with the questions of our identity and power. Who are we? To whom do we belong? Is there a power that is greater than ours? How can we know it? Our drivenness must give way to peacefulness, and our anxiety to joy. So concerned with effectiveness, we learn instead to be content with faithfulness. Strategy grows into trust, success into obedience, planning into prayer.

*Jim Wallis in the Soul of Politics page 200*

## *The Benediction*

Father, I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you; I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures. I wish no more than this, O Lord, into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you with all the love of my heart, for I love you, Lord and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve, and with boundless confidence.

*Charles de Foucauld*