

Making Space for God

Opening Prayer

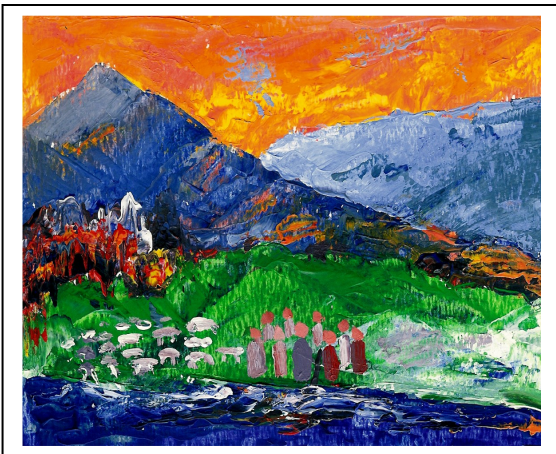
Almighty God, as you have sent Jesus to be for us light and truth, send now your Spirit upon us to grant us grace and strength to follow in his footsteps this day.
Amen

Looking Back

Take some time to settle yourself. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you quiet your mind. Review your calendar and journal for the past two months.

- List the people, projects, and events that have occupied your time.
- What emotions colored your experiences?
- When did you sense that Jesus was present to you?
- When did he seem distant or you seem distant from him?
- Note any life lessons or themes that have surfaced for you in this time. Offer that up to Jesus.
- Expectation- What do you hope will happen during your time with Jesus today? What do you seek? Tell him that.

Scripture Study - Be Strong and Courageous- Joshua 1:1-9



Crossing the Jordan, Steve Stuckey, 2007 Acrylic on Paper

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ² "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³ I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴ Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west. ⁵ No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

⁶ "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."¹

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Reflection Questions: Joshua and the people of Israel face a major transition. Moses has died and the nomadic people are preparing to enter a land filled with danger and opportunity. Describe the transition that you and the people you serve face. How do you feel? Tell the Lord. What promise has Joshua been given and why should he trust the promise? Why should you? Be strong and courageous are qualities of being. What does it look like when those qualities are at work in you? (note: courage is derived from the Latin word “cor” meaning “heart.” The root word in Hebrew means “be alert.”). In order to be courageous, what does the Lord say Joshua must “be alert” to? What does it mean to meditate? What helps or hinders you and your students from doing so? Note the promise that brackets the exhortation? How does this passage speak to your life today?

Exercise and Rest Take some time to walk around and enjoy the gardens. It is His gift to you today.

Reading for Reflection

Gabriel Marcel distinguished between approaching life as a problem and entering it as a mystery. If we deal with life as a problem, we reduce it to what we can do something about; we are concerned with figuring out and fixing. And, while there is an important place for figuring things out and fixing them, if that is all that we do we become myopic, managers and mechanics of what is immediately before us, with no peripheral vision and no horizons. We miss most of life. But if we approach life as a mystery, we are forever coming upon meanings that exceed our definitions, energy and resources unguessed in our calculations. “Mystery is not the absence of meaning, but the presence of more meaning that we can comprehend.”

Eugene Peterson in The Unnecessary Pastor, page 69

I feel more and more convinced that only a spirituality which thus puts the whole emphasis on the Reality of God, perpetually turning to Him, losing itself in Him, refusing to allow even the most pressing work or practical problems, even sin and failure, to distract from God- only this is a safe foundation for spiritual work. This alone is able to keep alive the awed, adoring sense of the mysteries among which we move, and of the tiny bit which at the best we ourselves can apprehend of them- and yet, considering that immensity and our tininess, the marvel of what we do know and feel.

Evelyn Underhill, Concerning the Inner Life, Page 26

"Certainty is the mark of the common-sense life: gracious uncertainty is the mark of the spiritual life. To be certain of God means that we are uncertain in all our ways, we do not know what a day may bring forth. This is generally said with a sigh of sadness, it should be rather an expression of breathless expectation. We are uncertain of the next step, but we are certain of God. Immediately we abandon to God, and do the duty that lies nearest, He packs our life with surprises all the time."

Oswald Chambers "My Utmost for His Highest"

I will be with you .Be Strong. Be Courageous .I will never leave or forsake you!