



WELLSPRING

Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Wellspring Community Outreach

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

St. Francis de Sales teaches us that serenity is not the absence of trouble but finding inner peace during troublesome times through trust in God's steadfast and loving care and focusing on the present moment and not on the anxieties, doubts and fears of the future. He advises us to find serenity within by accepting God's plan, being patient with self and others, avoiding haste and anger, finding God in quiet prayer and daily duties, and knowing that God provides strength for carrying our burdens.

I do not know the source of the following story. The story, however, gives us good insight into the nature of serenity. Years ago, a farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands. Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the Atlantic, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops. As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals. Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer. "Are you a good farm hand?" the farmer asked him.

"Well, I can sleep when the wind blows," answered the little man. Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him. The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt satisfied with the man's work. Then one night the wind howled loudly in from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to the hired hand's sleeping quarters. He shook the little man and yelled, "Get up! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!" The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "No sir. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows."

Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried outside to prepare for the storm. To his amazement, he discovered that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops, and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down. Nothing could blow away. The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to sleep while the wind blew.

When you are prepared, spiritually, mentally, and physically, you have nothing to fear. The hired hand in the story was able to sleep because he had secured the farm against the storm. We secure ourselves against the storms of life by grounding ourselves in the Word of God. We don't need to understand, we just need to hold His hand to have peace in the middle of storms. We find serenity deep within us when we faithfully attend to our daily chores, fulfill our responsibilities, trust in the Lord and leave everything in the provident care of the Lord. In Him we find serenity.

Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace in the middle of the storm.

More on Serenity next week.....

Be sure to take a few still moments during the week.

Bless yourself with stillness!

Be Still Moment - Allow yourself to be still for a moment

Christ's flock is made up of sheep that not only listen to their shepherd, but are also able to recognize his voice, to follow him, faithfully and with full awareness, on the pastures of eternal life. (Pope John XXIII)

Salesian Moment – A moment with St. Francis de Sales

It is not enough to appear devout and perform some acts of devotion. One has to be truly devout in thoughts, words and deeds.

Whistling in the Garden...

There was a man whose hobby was growing roses. When he worked in his rose garden, he always whistled. It seemed to everyone that he was whistling much louder than was needed for his own enjoyment. One day a neighbor asked him why it was that he always whistled so loudly. The man then took the neighbor into his home to meet his wife. The woman was not only an invalid but was completely blind as well. The man, you see, was whistling, not for his benefit, but rather for the benefit of his wife. He wanted his blind wife to know that he was nearby, and that she was not alone. This story is a wonderful example of "God-with-US." Christmas, Easter, Pentecost – all our great feast days remind us that God is near, He is a 'God-with-us'. May the experience of His presence strengthen us in our daily life, giving us hope and a reason to live!

Vice-President of Peas Please...



A man received a promotion to the position of Vice President of the company he worked for. The promotion went to his head, and for weeks on end he bragged to anyone and everyone that he was now Vice President. His bragging came to an abrupt halt when his wife, so embarrassed by his behavior, said, "Listen Bob, it's not that big a deal. These days everyone's a vice president. Why they even have a vice president of peas down at the supermarket!"

Somewhat deflated, Bob rang the local supermarket to find out if this was true. "Can I speak to the Vice President of peas please?" he asked, to which the reply came: "of fresh or frozen?"

Did you Know?

Who spread the Stations of the Cross throughout the world?

St. Leonard promoted the Stations in a way no one else had before. Jerusalem was a long way away. It took months for a healthy, lucky pilgrim to reach its walls and reverently follow the Stations of the Cross. And healthy, lucky pilgrims were comparatively few.

St. Leonard of Port Maurice mused over this, casting his mind's eye over the miles and miles of land and sea between Italy—where he lived—and Jerusalem. How he wished that he and all Catholics might venerate the Stations! Not in a distant, unfamiliar fashion, but with a devotion that was very vibrant and close to their hearts—and close to their homes.

Well, there was only one thing to be done. And Leonard did it. The saintly Franciscan was a missionary, as were most Franciscans. From 1708 until his death forty-three years later, he traveled Italy, preaching. Everywhere he went, Leonard promoted special devotion to the Stations of the Cross. Many of his fellow Franciscans assisted him in this work.

That is not all he did, however. As he traveled, Leonard built replicas of the Stations so that Catholics could follow Our Lord's path to Golgotha with concrete steps and depictions. Leonard erected 572 Stations of the Cross throughout Italy. The most famous of these are the Stations in the Colosseum, where the Vatican's Good Friday service has been held for nearly 300 years.

Pope Leo XIV.....

May those who suffer find true peace.....

Pope Leo XIV sends a letter to Cardinal Michael Czerny, his special envoy for the 34th World Day of the Sick celebration on 11 February at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace in Chiclayo, Peru.

He invites the sick to offer their suffering to the Lord for world peace and to bear witness to faith, hope, and charity, together with those who care for them.

“In a special union of prayer with the Church spread throughout the world” for all the faithful who are ill and afflicted by sickness, disease, or pain, Pope Leo XIV prays that with the support of Mary’s maternal intercession, they may “kindly offer to the merciful God, through Mary, for the peace of this world, all the hardships of their lives.” He recalls that Saint Augustine, in his Confessions, rightly teaches that “the human soul is restless, and only in the ineffable charity of God, and in its application in daily and spiritual life, can it find true and lasting peace.”

Pray for each other.....

Let us stay close to each other in spirit and prayer as we continue our journey through life with all its joyful moments as well as moments not so joyful. Be faithful to your calling! All you do may not be successful in your eyes or in the eyes of others. The real success lies in your fidelity to who you are and what you have come to know as your calling. Just be faithful and be joyful!

God bless you and your families,

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

F-E-A-R has two meanings:

Forget Everything and Run OR Face Everything and Rise.

The choice is yours.

