

January 27, 2008

Guided Meditation on Psalm 27

Remembrance Sunday
3rd After Epiphany

Today our scripture focus is Psalm 27.

Frequently the psalms are offered in our prayers and litanies because they speak so honestly of the joys and struggles of human life.

There are psalms of Creation, psalms of Thanksgiving, psalms of Confidence, Wisdom psalms, psalms of Retribution, psalms of Praise, psalms of Personal Lament and psalms of Communal Lament.

The psalms cover so many of our human emotions –fear, doubt, trust, anxiety, hope, anger, emptiness, love.....

In the same psalm we can hear about God's presence and God's absence; a strong statement of faith and trust followed by crying out to God who is experienced as absent. The psalms give us permission to take all of our lives to God – the good, the bad, and the ugly, the joy and the pain.

Today we have designated as Remembrance Sunday – a day to remember those whom we have lost through death or through the living death of Alzheimer's.

This sermon time will be a little different.

I want to offer you a guided meditation. (Andrea start to play music softly)

I invite you to get as comfortable as you can.

Close your eyes.

Allow yourself to become aware of your breathing – in and out, in and out....

Into your silence allow yourself to bring into your heart someone you have loved who is no longer with you in body; someone you travelled through life with who is no longer travelling with you now; someone you have loved and who loved you.

Maybe it is someone you have lost through death; maybe it is someone you have lost through separation and divorce; maybe it is someone you are losing through the slow death of Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia.

Bring the person to mind and heart.

See them.

Say their name.

Remember perhaps a nickname you had for them.
Remember what they called you; perhaps a nickname they had for you.
Allow yourself to feel gratitude for having had this person in your life –
this person in all their uniqueness, in all their humanness.

Let your heart and mind be open to a memory.
Remember a time when you shared laughter and joy together.
Remember a time when you shared tears and sadness together.

Allow yourself to see the relationship in all its variety – the good and the
bad, the joy and the pain.....
Times when you have turned the relationship over into God's hands because
you had reached the end of your rope.....
.....moments of grace.....

Remember their features – their face.....their smile....their laugh.....
their clothes, what they loved to wear...a dress up occasion....
a time of celebrating a passage – a birthday, an anniversary, a wedding, a
joyful gathering.....
Allow yourself to be in that place with your loved one.....

Remember their idiosyncricies –one of their quirks or quarks.....

Remember a time when they were proud of you.....
Remember a time when you were proud of them.....
A difficult mountain that was climbed.....
A new adventure undertaken.....

It's okay if nothing comes to mind.....
Just allow yourself to breath in and breath out....
Perhaps you might silently say their name...as you breath in.....
And say "I love you" as you breath out.....
"Name"..... "I love you".....
Make this breathing and naming into a prayer – a prayer that rises like
incense up to God.....

Allow yourself to feel this special love that you have for this person.....a
love that transcends space and time.....a love that is greater than even
death.

Offer thanks and praise to God that you have shared your life with your loved one.....

Be aware of God's grace, God's love, the greatest love there is!.....

A love that is there for your loved one in life, in death, in life beyond death.....

A love that will not let them go.....

A love that is your light, your salvation, your stronghold.....

A love that will hide you in His shelter in the day of trouble.....

A love that will conceal you under the cover of His tent.....

A love that will set you high on a rock.....

Be aware of how much God loves you.....

Hear God saying the name of your loved one and saying how much God loves your loved one.....

Hear God saying your name and saying how much He loves you.....

Allow yourself to give your beloved into the everlasting arms of God...

With thanksgiving say the name of your beloved as God receives them into His heavenly realm.....

As you breathe in say the name of your beloved.....

As you breathe out say "Into God's hands I commend your spirit".....

"Into God's hands I commend your spirit".....

"Into God's hands I commend your spirit"....

"Into God's hands I commend your spirit".....

Amen. Amen. Amen.