

Sunday Wonderings for a Friday Morning - September 6th 2024

*Dear Jesus, I know the feeling of an unanswered prayer. Honestly, it can sting. But when I come to trust that you are God and I am not, you reveal your plan, and it usually exceeds what I asked of you. Your wisdom, Jesus, humbles me, and for this I am grateful. Amen.*¹

I found meaning in this prayer that concluded a reflection on the Syrophenician Woman's pleas for healing for her daughter. You know the passage, the one where Jesus is less than complimentary, and the woman will not be swayed and insists on God's healing presence. And God responds.

This week I've been thinking about grief, in particular the grief of Jasper and each one of us. Grief is not an easy journey, ever. I struggle with the notion of those who say experience makes us stronger. As if we should welcome difficult experiences. I don't buy it. What I do know is that when I am fully present in my experience, no matter how difficult, God shows up and walks with me.

Early in the week, I found myself needing solitude. My hosts are wonderfully wise and caring folks who seem to know how to offer just what I need for that day. On this evening, it was the solitude of my grief. I walked in the evening sun, alone, the movement of my body allowing the flood of tears that cried out to be felt. As I walked, I found myself invited into a nearby cemetery. It was a perfectly quiet place to reside in my sorrow. No one rushed with boxes of tissue, no one said a word. They just rested in place and held my mourning. It was heavenly. That night I slept better than I had in a long time. The next morning, reflecting on my walk I penned these words:

I walk among the dead
submitting to the mourning of my tears
and not a soul is disturbed.
I think I'll come again.

Grief and mourning is part of our healing. It is part of the journey of recovery from a traumatic event. We are all in the process of our healing and each of us will find our way and path of healing and each in our own time. My prayer for you is that you take the time to grieve and mourn. To grieve is the expression of feelings on the inside and mourning is the necessary outward expression of those feelings. Find the places and people who can welcome your mourning. All of the feelings, the pain, the anger, the worry, the sadness, even the unexpected laughter and joy that comes. Welcome them all as Rumi would say. They come to teach us.

¹ God Pause, Thursday September 5th, 2024 accessed @ www.luthersem.edu/godpause/2024/09/05/35101/

Someone recently reminded me this journey is more like walking a labyrinth. It is not linear. It is back and forth and in and out. Each of us, with and without homes standing – we are all grieving. All mourning from different places in that labyrinth of feelings. We are all on this labyrinth together.

Walk with tenderness. Trust in the places where God will meet you and offer you healing. Wander where you need to. Persist, mourn and know God is here with you. God will not abandon you.

Thanks be to God.

Written and offered by Rev. Linda McLaren