

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!



in the HCUC

No. 7

For 2 July 2017

Dear Friends

Two little word pictures have been living in me in recent days.

The first is a story about one person. After the terror attack on London Bridge, even before it had stopped, a young nurse lost her life as she ran towards the mayhem on the bridge—running to help others. Instead of running away from the danger she ran towards it. What prompted her action?

The other story centered on the horrific fire engulfing the Grenfell Tower—all 24 storeys a raging inferno. What struck me was a one sentence comment. It said that ‘the very next day thousands of people came with food, clothing, money and flowers’. It happens all round the world. There is an outpouring of compassion in practical action.

Personally I find these two little vignettes significant. They are tiny windows on a big issue. Namely, are we as humans basically, deeply, good, or are we so flawed that every Sunday in worship we confess ‘there is no health in us’?

I found it a positive thought to reflect on the fact that no government ordered the people to go to the Grenfell Tower site with their gifts and their compassion. No police or military commanded people to respond. Nothing was demanded, the gifts were for people in need. Friends or strangers were not counted. Religious, political or social preferences didn’t feature. There seems to be a great well of love flowing like an underground river in our lives. We are born with it. In fact it is THE most certain and essential aspect of our inner being. In other words this is Who we ARE.

But—in life this truth is buried under layers of heavy emphasis on our differences. The differences we learn can so often slide into feeling separate. That’s when attitudes of ‘us’ and ‘them’, I’m right and you’re wrong, arise. Divisions deepen, fears increase, misunderstandings multiply.

The very subtle truth which is hard to grasp is being aware that ‘Yes, we are separate on the surface level of life, but deeper down there is no separation.’

Sincerely - Lester

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 3 July:	103:6-17	Gen 18:16-end	Matt 8:18-22
Tuesday 4 July:	26	Gen 19:15-29	Matt 8:23-27
Wednesday 5 July:	34:1-12	Gen 21:5,8-20	Matt 8:28-end
Thursday 6 July:	116:1-7	Gen 22:1-19	Matt 9:1-8
Friday 7 July:	106:1-5	Gen 23:1-4,19; 24:1-8,62-end	Matt 9:9-13
Saturday 8 July:	135:1-6	Gen 27:1-5a,15-29	Matt 9:14-17
Sunday 9 July <u>Pentecost 5</u>			
Ps 45:10-17; Gen 24:34-38,42-49,58-67; Rom 7:15-25a; Matt 11:16-19,25-30			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 10 July:	91:1-10	Gen 28:10-3rd	Matt 9:18-26
Tuesday 11 July:	17:1-8	Gen 32:22-end	Matt 9:32-end
Wednesday 12 July:	33:1-4, 18-end	Gen 41:55-end; 42:5-7,17-end	Matt 10:1-7
Thursday 13 July:	105:11-17	Gen 44:18-21, 23-29; 45:1-5	Matt 10:7-15
Friday 14 July:	37:3-6, 27-28	Gen 46:1-7,28-30	Matt 10:16-23
Saturday 15 July:	105:1-7	Gen 49:29-end; 50:15-25	Matt 10:24-33
Sunday 16 July <u>Pentecost 6</u>			
Ps 119:105-112; Gen 25:19-34; Rom 8:1-11; Matt 13:1-9,18-23			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 17 July:	124	Exod 1:8-14,22	Matt 10:34-11:1
Tuesday 18 July:	69:1,2,31-end	Exod 2:1-15	Matt 11:20-24
Wednesday 19 July:	103:1-7	Exod 3:1-6,9-12	Matt 11:25-27
Thursday 20 July:	105:1,2,23	Exod 3:13-20	Matt 11:28-end
Friday 21 July:	116:10-end	Exod 11:10-12:14	Matt 12:1-8
Saturday 22 July:	42:1-10	2 Cor 5:14-17	John 20:1-2, 11-18
Sunday 23 July <u>Pentecost 7</u>			
Ps 139:1-12,23-24; Gen 28:10-19a; Rom 8:12-25; Matt 13:24-30,36-43			

IT'S EASIER TO GROW THAN TO GROW UP

This heading sounds a bit tricky. It leapt off a page one day and was a bit puzzling to understand.

As part of the wonder of this evolving universe we grow from a sperm combining with an egg. We grow in a womb. We come into this human life as a baby, then a crawling and exploring infant—soon becoming a child, a teenager, adult and all too soon an ageing adult with a body that begins ‘falling apart’. But the more important growth is the growth of our inner awareness. One way we might describe this growth is to see it as the change and development in our consciousness.

The spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle puts it clearly when he says: *“The transformation of human consciousness is no longer a luxury, so to speak, available only to a few isolated individuals, but a necessity if humankind is not to destroy itself. At present our awareness or consciousness is proving to be getting more dysfunctional, while there is an arising of a new higher consciousness. Paradoxically things are getting worse and better at the same time, although the worse is more apparent because it makes so much noise.”*

So the sharp question is how do we raise this higher awareness of the dimension we can call the highest consciousness? The mind can't do it as the mind has no ability to think its way into knowing this highest consciousness. And further our normal ego doesn't want to know how to do it because our ego wants to be ‘the one’ who is in control. All other views are rejected!

All this may sound just a bit too complicated to bother about! So let's go back to our two stories. The reaching out with compassion, love and help didn't happen because of the minds of those doing it. The action came from the well of love and compassion which we are born with.

You can call it the inherent source we all have within. So to dip into it requires time to be still and silent.

In the biblical story every time we read of a mountain top featuring a meeting with God or Infinite wisdom it is a symbol of going higher. It is like a finger pointing beyond what is visible to what is invisible to our eyes, but is seen by Spirit with us and is heard by our heart and not our ears.

CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN

It's an interesting exercise to note all the incidents in the life of Jesus when he shared his teaching on a mountain.

Of course the obvious example is the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt ch. 5-7)

Gathered under that title we find

The Beatitudes

- * Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of God.
- * Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
... (and the rest)
Matt 5:1-12

What amazing teaching. — It turns our normal view of life (and how to make ‘a go of it’) upside-down. It is a finger pointing beyond the words—like Jesus pointing beyond himself. He is pointing to the higher consciousness—the fresh new vision open to all. The Kingdom comes first. Seek it.

When we look at a tree and perceive its stillness we become still ourselves. You connect with it at a very deep level.

– E Tolle

- * Silence is helpful, but we don't need it to find stillness.

Even when there is noise, we can be aware of the stillness under the noise, of the space from which the noise arises.

This is the inner space of pure awareness—consciousness itself.

- * Stillness is the only thing in this world that has no form. But then, it is not really a thing, and it is vaster than this world.
- * Let stillness direct your words and actions.

– E Tolle

Try a little stillness now —
Yes! Right now.