

## Meditation on Change

“Change is the only constant in life,” observed the philosopher Heraclitus in the fifth century BC. In today’s world we might just say, “Change happens!”

We all realize that change is not only inevitable but is an extremely important part of life. Who wants to stay an infant forever? Who wants to stay thirty-five forever...let’s see a show of hands on that one!

The longer one lives, the greater the changes. Even though change can often bring fear and anxiety, many changes are perceived as good. We like those changes...like having cataract surgery or a hip replacement...like having women priests and bishops...like me typing this meditation on a computer rather than my old portable typewriter, using miles of correction tape.

However, not all change is perceived as “good” by us. Look how our lives have been turned upside down by the Covid-19 pandemic. Could any of us ever have imagined the changes that would affect us so quickly and so deeply? As with other difficult changes in our lives caused by death of a loved one or deteriorating health, we may find ourselves asking, “God, what are you doing? Where are you, God, in the midst of all this turmoil?”

I think God is exactly where God always is...in our hearts, in our neighbourhood, in our world. He is the antithesis of “Change happens.” His love, his holy word in the Scriptures, never change. During this pandemic I think He is calling people back to Himself, calling us to walk more closely with Him, making us focus on what truly matters in our lives.

Since mid-March we have not been in our church buildings. Yet we continue to worship, to give glory to God, to come together as a community, even though we are doing it “virtually” for the most part. Our Sunday YouTube services are very much appreciated. However, we miss our weekly in- person Eucharist and not gathering together for sharing the peace and chatting at coffee/tea time.

How are you handling our *pandemic* Eucharist?

We are told by our Bishops, both Lutheran and Anglican, that theological decisions regarding virtual communion require more time, prayer, and consideration, which I think is understandable. We are told to be guided by the Spirit. *God is with us...guiding us.*

The Spirit has led me back to the Scriptures where I am reminded that the first Eucharist was not in a church or temple. It was in a home where friends gathered for a Passover meal. They wore ordinary clothing, used their everyday dishes and utensils. The essence of the occasion was not enhanced by stained-glass windows or beautifully carved pulpits, but by the humility of washing feet, in Jesus offering himself as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of all mankind, in Jesus telling us to eat the bread, *This is my body*, and drink the wine, *This is my blood*, in memory of Him.

The Spirit leads me, as I take my own *pandemic* bread and wine, to feel the presence of Jesus coming to nourish my body and my soul. I humbly say thank you...for Jesus dwelling in me, for sacrificing His life that I may have eternal life, for deeming me worthy of His love and forgiveness.

The Spirit may guide each of us along a different path. That's ok. Just be still and listen for Her guidance. *God is with us...guiding us.*

How are we handling not gathering in person?

This is so difficult because it's not just our church community that we are missing but our other friends and family members, plus our normal everyday activities. I never imagined that I wouldn't be able to get my hair cut for months on end...or that my doctor visits would be over the phone! But here we are, and we are called to help each other make the best of it.

It seems to be a primitive urge that humans desire a social group, a tribe, in which people genuinely care about each other. I feel thankful and blessed that our Parish *tribe* is using various means to bring us together, and to show people care about us. We are using The Key, daily meditations, our virtual council meetings, our virtual coffee hour, Zoom Bible Study, and phone calls to stay connected.

The early missionaries used letters to instruct fellow Christians and to lift the spirits of those who were suffering from persecution and lack of hope. Not that I am calling Key articles or daily meditations *Epistles*...heaven forbid...but so many of our fellow parishioners are reaching out, as the Spirit moves them, to keep in touch with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I know this sharing of ideas is giving us a feeling of togetherness, a feeling of being connected, that is very important to relieve our own, very real suffering during these times of social isolation. *God is with us...working through others.*

Our faith leads us to believe that God is the most important constant in life.

He is constantly with us.

Let's use these days of limited activities to walk more closely with Him, to truly experience His love and guidance.

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