

Approaching Life

Learning Jesus

Prayer as acceptance and protest

*To pray is to revolt. The one who prays is not saying, that's the way is and that's that!
The one who prays is saying, that's the way it is, but it should not be that way.*

Dorothy Soelle

*Our crying out is, as it was for Jesus on the cross,
the deepest and most radical way
of affirming our faith in his sovereign power.*

Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*

Jesus is the space God's creates for us in which we can be most fully ourselves.

Learning Jesus requires patience and involves suffering -

" because it is painful to open the mind and heart to new truth".

If Jesus is pioneer, or trail-blazer for us - can we let him accompany us through our wounded, desert places? Can we let these places become - surprisingly and paradoxically - fertile places of grace? These places are liminal, or threshold places - in-between places where we lose our ability to fix or to understand or control. These places are places of displacement. We do not have to search for such places, or make them happen: they find us, and all we need to do is notice and identify such places. We move from involuntary displacement - from "Why is this happening to me?" - to hearing God's call into conversion, acceptance, transformation and hope.

Our daily choices need to arise out of our daily "learning Jesus". Through this life-long apprenticeship of the human heart we gradually wake up to love's invitation. And this always occurs in our everyday, in the "crucible of the ordinary": through a "severer listening", through a change of heart, through passion or suffering, through the "next thing", or through our neighbour.

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**Identify a place of limitation –
an angry-making or hard place of struggle.**

**It may be an experience of ordinariness, smallness, or powerlessness,
discontent, restlessness or mortality.**

Stay with this place - let it speak to you.

Explore its texture and contours.

What's it feel like?

What is it inviting you to express?

*I so much want the truth of Jesus's life to be fully the truth of my own life,
that I find myself by God's grace asking to follow Jesus in as intimate union as possible.*

Ignatius of Loyola

*Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Matthew 11: 28-30