

# ***SPIRITUALITY OF THE DESERT***

## ***DESERT HOSPITALITY***

**My life is with my brother (and sister)**

Abba Anthony

**The way forward is the way to someone else.**

John V. Taylor

Hospitality begins at home – with ourselves.  
Hospitality is about acceptance, of ourselves and others,  
and is always in the context of the immediate and the concrete.

[Remember] You shall also love the stranger,  
For you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 10:19

Charles de Foucauld, a modern desert monk, said of the human being that  
“Behind the veils and appearances, [there is] an unspeakably holy being”.

***Think of a friend, a neighbour, a stranger, an enemy in the light of these words.***

*Do you want to live as if these words are true?*

*And what difference would it make?*

**It is possible to be a solitary in one's mind while living in a crowd,  
and it possible for one who is a solitary to live in the crowd of his own thoughts.**

Amma Syncletia

The desert – at best – is not an escape. Transformation, which we long for, does not happen by escaping ourselves, or others. Withdrawal is not escape: it is about focussing on what matters. Spend some time on what you would like to run away from. Of course we must move away from what is harmful or destructive – but so often the Other (while at first seemingly threatening or even frightening ) can become gift and invitation.

**He who sins against his brother (or sister) sins against himself.**

Abbe Anthony

The desert asks us to face and stop the many ways we project our issues on to others.

This requires courage and hard work.

St. Augustine asks a powerful question:

**“Whatever makes us think that our enemies will do us more harm than our enmities?”**