

May 13, 2020 – Slow Me Down Lord

Dear Parishioners,

We all have had a lot of time for reflection over these past two months, and we each have had our own gained insights and lessons that we've learned. I think that most would agree that it has caused us to nearly stop in our tracks and take a deep breath. I know it has for me.

Within the first few days and weeks I have heard so many people comment that it is so nice to see families out for a walk together, or people stopping to greet their neighbors. I noticed, recently, as I was out on my walk there were three groups of people sitting in lawn chairs in front of their homes visiting (at a safe distance) with one another. It really was refreshing and encouraging to see. It brought back memories from my own childhood when this was a common site. In this age of technology and social media we are learning to connect with one another again.

I think that the greatest lesson for me has been to lower my expectations and to become more content with the simple things of life and the people in my life. I have grown to appreciate the beauty of the sun on my face and taking a walk on a nice day.

Recently, I have discovered the location of one of our diocesan parishes in the neighborhoods where I walk. The doors were open and I went in. It is such a beautiful church. I sat down for a while and spent some time in prayer. As part of my routine now, I stop on my walk and I go into the church and pray Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours. It has become a high-light of the day.

I, like most of us, have been forced to slow it down and step back a bit, which, I think is a good thing. Of course, when all this is finally over we'll probably get back to "normal," which is a good thing, but hopefully we can take with us the things we have learned from this experience.

I'd like to share with you a prayer that I may have shared with you previously, but as simple as it is it can remind us of what is really important.

Slow me down, Lord.
Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.
Steady my hurried pace.
Give me, amidst the day's confusion
the calmness of the everlasting hills.

Break the tension of my nerves and muscles
with the soothing music of singing streams
that live in my memory.

Help me to know the magical, restoring power of sleep.
Teach me the art of taking minute vacations...
slowing down to look at a flower,
to chat with a friend,
to read a few lines from a good book.

Remind me
of the fable of the hare and the tortoise;
that the race is not always to the swift;
that there is more to life than measuring its speed.
Let me look up at the branches of the towering oak
and know that...it grew slowly...and well.

Inspire me
to send my own roots down deep...
into the soil of life's endearing values...

That I may grow toward the stars of my greater destiny.

Written by Orin L. Crain

"Each one of us can say:
"I hope, because God is beside me."

Pope Francis
Beautiful Hope

Enjoy!
Father Joe