

Reflection for Thursday 7th Week of Easter 2020

Jesus said, *"I have made your name (the Father) known to them and will continue to make it known . . ."* We know that the power of the name of Jesus brings healing, wholeness and reconciliation to people's lives because the Father was working in and through Jesus. But, however much we may know and understand about Jesus and the Father there will always be more to be discovered. Knowing Jesus and the Father is not just a head exercise, it is also an exercise of the heart. We know people by name and the more time we spend with them, the more we give and share with them, the better we get to know them, and the picture we have of them is constantly enriched and deepened; even their faults and failings help to enhance and enrich our picture of them. However, one of the ongoing challenges we face in life is the desire to change people into the image we want them to be, however exemplary that image might be. This is also true with God who we so often want to fit into our image of God. So, when life events go askew, we seriously question God. Listen to a story about a neurotic: *I was a neurotic for years. Anxious, depressed, selfish. And everyone kept telling me to change. And I resented them, and agreed with them, and wanted to change, but simply couldn't, no matter how hard I tried. What hurt the most was that, like the others, my closest friend kept urging me to change. So, I felt powerless and trapped. One day my friend said "You don't have to change. I love you just as you are." Those words were music to my ears: "Don't change. Don't change. Don't change... I love you as you are." I relaxed. I came alive. And, suddenly, I changed!*

Let's turn this story around. If we stop trying to fit God into our image, we will allow God to be God; Jesus to be Jesus; the Father to be the Father. It will allow our image and understanding of God to change continually for the good. As our image of God is changed, we will find ourselves changing with it. We will truly come to know Jesus and the Father as they are and give thanks and praise with joyful hearts. This is what the Holy Spirit is coming to do for us. **Now** listen to the Divine Image by William Blake:

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love	All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight	Return their thankfulness.
For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love	Is God, our Father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love	Is Man, his child and care.
For Mercy has a human heart,	Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,	And Peace, the human dress.
Then every man, of every clime,	That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,	Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.
And all must love the human form,	In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell	There God is dwelling too.

And yet another story

The Prime minister visits Glasgow hospital, and is shown around. In one ward, one patient says to him, "My lurve is leek a rade, rade rose..." The next patient says to him "Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie. O, what a panic's in thy

breastie!" The Prime minister says to his guide: "... Psychiatric ward?". The guide replies: "Nope... **serious Burns unit...**"