

Homily 13th Sunday Year B 2021

Faith is a key element in the healings of Jesus. Ronald Rolheiser offers this reflection: *Faith is made manifest in our decisions, our commitments, and our life-choices, more than in any intellectual belief or passionate feeling. It shows itself in decisions, in choosing certain commitments and remaining with them. Assessing faith may not be based upon where our heads and hearts are, but whether our actions radiate charity, graciousness, respect, hospitality, honesty, generosity, moral integrity, concern for justice. Faith is judged by these things, not only by how we think, feel, or expresses ourselves explicitly in the area of faith.*

In Faith, we are called to bring healing to our planet conscious that:

Nature heals: Being in nature, or viewing scenes of nature, reduces anger, fear, and stress and increases pleasant feelings. Exposure to nature not only makes one feel better emotionally, it contributes to your physical wellbeing, reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones. It may even reduce mortality.

Nature soothes. It helps us cope with pain. Because we are genetically programmed to find trees, plants, water, and other nature elements engrossing; we are absorbed by nature scenes and distracted from our pain and discomfort.

Nature restores Studies show that one's mood is improved after spending time outside; changing from depressed, stressed, and anxious to greater calm and balance. Other studies show that time in nature or scenes of nature help enhance psychological wellbeing, meaningfulness, and vitality. It also increases our ability to pay attention.

Nature connects Time spent in nature also connects us to each other and the larger world. Residents in public housing who had trees and green space around their building reported knowing more people, having stronger feelings of unity with neighbours, being more concerned with helping and supporting each other, and having stronger feelings of belonging. They also had a reduced risk of street crime, lower levels of violence and aggression and a better capacity to cope with life's demands, especially the stresses of living in poverty.

We will benefit more by caring for our planet. Let us, like Jairus and the woman with the haemorrhage place our trust in God. The more we are healed by the planet the stronger will be our mutual reverence and respect for the planet.

All powerful God, you are present in the universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with tenderness all that exists.

Empower us to protect life and beauty.

Fill us with your peace,

that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

God of the poor, help us rescue the abandoned and forgotten,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,

help us protect the world, not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Teach us the worth of each thing,

fill us with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us in our struggle, for justice, love and peace.

Don't stress about your eyesight failing as you get older... It's nature's way of protecting you from shock as you walk past the mirror.

How do you properly identify a dogwood tree? By its bark.