

Homily 7th Sunday Year C 2022

Thích Nhất Hạnh (d. 22/02/22), a renowned Vietnamese Buddhist known as the "*father of mindfulness*", has had a major influence on Western Buddhism and helped transform lives. He encouraged people to take an active role in creating change, rephrasing the five precepts for lay Buddhists asking people to refrain from negative activities. Nhất Hạnh invited people to take positive action to prevent or minimize others' negative actions. So, instead of merely refraining from stealing, he said, "*prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on Earth*" by, for example, taking action against unfair practices or unsafe workplaces: echoes of Jesus.

Buddhism calls for balance and harmony in life. Something many yearn for but find almost impossible to realise. Nhất Hạnh would have loved Jesus' teaching about loving your enemies with compassion and good will. Our liturgical readings are based on the simple principle that we are all made in the image of God. We are all blessed with the ability to do whatever Jesus asks of us simply out of love because we are made out of love. Yet, why is it so difficult?? Simple answer: ***We want to be in control!!***

But being in control never works. It would be good to think that Jesus had the following conversation with the Father in the desert:

Jesus: *Father, how will I know what I ought to say and do when I tell them how much you love them and want their happiness and self-fulfilment?*

Father: *Just trust me!*

Jesus: *Some people will resent me for telling tax-collectors and sinners how much you love them. How will I deal with them?*

Father: *Just trust me!*

Jesus: *What if I fail to persevere in the ill-treatment and rejection in store for me?*

Father: ***Just trust me!***

Jesus did not have all the answers, did not know all the details of what was going to happen in any situation. But, because he had complete trust in his Father, he was able to say and do the things he did. He could not have done this if he was in full control which hinders the possibility of true trust. Jesus would not have called out to the Father on the cross if he had not trusted him throughout his life!!

Into the Eye of God (Macrina Wiederkehr osb)

For your prayer, your journey into God,

may you be given a small storm

a little hurricane named after you,

persistent enough to get your attention

violent enough to awaken you to new depths

strong enough to shake you to the roots

majestic enough to remind you of your origin:

made of the earth yet steeped in eternity

frail human dust yet soaked with infinity.

You begin your storm under the Eye of God.

A watchful, caring eye gazes in your direction

as you wrestle with the life force within.

In the midst of these holy winds

In the midst of this divine wrestling

your storm journey like all hurricanes

leads you into the eye of God

where all is calm and quiet.

A stillness beyond imagining!

Into the Eye of God.

I called Animal control Welfare today and said, *"I've just found a suitcase in the woods with a fox and four cubs."* *"That's terrible,"* the woman on the phone replied. *"Are they moving?"* I replied, *"I'm not sure, to be honest, but that would explain the suitcase."*