

Reflection Tuesday Week 5 – 2022

In his wisdom Solomon recognised that the temple he had built was nothing without the presence of God and the prayer offered there. This is true about any church – the presence of God and all the prayers offered there is what makes it such a holy place. Being in the church alone or with others, the holiness of the place cannot but touch you and, in it, offer you healing, comfort, peace, security, and forgiveness. Our founder, Emmanuel d'Alzon, often spent hours before the Blessed Sacrament especially when he was exhausted or facing impossible challenges. He would emerge hours later refreshed and renewed – an affirmation of the importance of prayer. What is reassuring is the gentle but powerful presence of God's mercy, forgiveness and love. In the mercy of God, we discover the ability to forgive others whatever the hurt. Our grievances and hurts, however deep and cutting, founded on rational and well-reasoned argument, become but shadows of reality. It is impossible to be angry and offended by others in the presence of God's great mercy and love.

John O'Donohue writes "Forgiveness is one of the really difficult things in life. The logic of receiving hurt seems to run in the direction of never forgetting either the hurt or the hurter. When you forgive, some deeper, divine generosity takes over. When you can forgive, then you are free. When you cannot forgive, you are a prisoner of the hurt done to you. If you are really disappointed in someone and you become embittered, you become incarcerated inside that feeling. Only the grace of forgiveness can break the straight logic of hurt and embitterment. It gives you a way out, because it places the conflict on a completely different level. In a strange way, it keeps the whole conflict human. You begin to see and understand the conditions, circumstances, or weakness that made the other person act as they did."