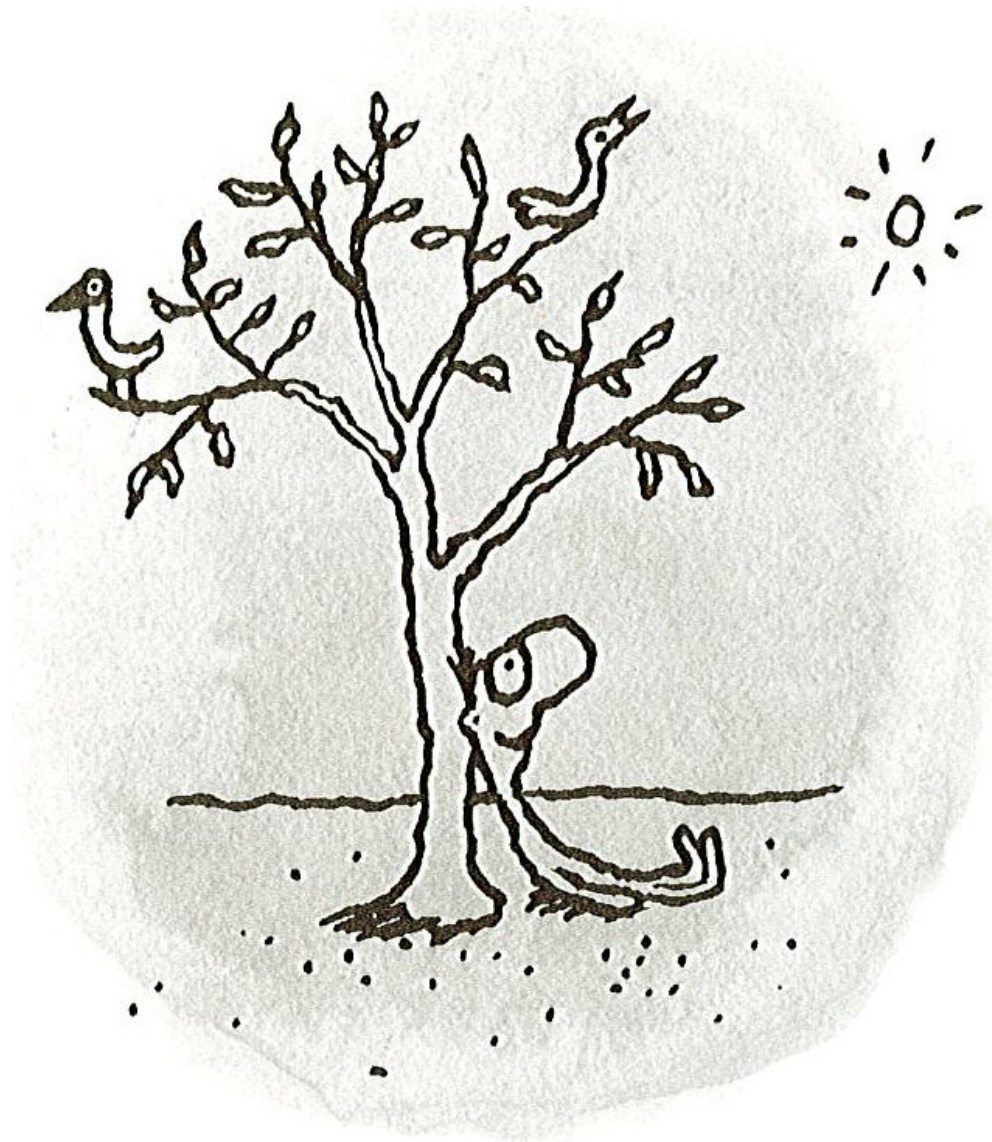


The Everyday Retreat

Week 3 – Review After Prayer



Lennis

6th – 12th July

The Review after Prayer

After a period of contemplative prayer has finished, sit in God's presence and remember the experience that you had. Visualise it. Relive it. Feel the love, the thanks, the anger, the fear, the struggle or resistance again. Experience your feelings again. Let the feelings arise within you, slowly and reverently. Be aware of God's presence now as you remember and relive. What are your feelings? Desires and longings? Identify them specifically. What is your struggle? Identify it concretely. Can you name the reasons for our reactions? Let the experience of prayer come to awareness. Let the focus be not so much on the clever ideas you had but on your feelings - the interior reactions of your heart.

The substance of the review is therefore the consolations, fears, anxieties, boredom, distractions, struggles or resistances, especially if these were deep or disturbing.

This review after prayer helps us reflect upon what was happening in our heart during the time of prayer and how God is revealing Himself to us through our emotions and moods. Note these reactions, these heart-felt longings, and the experiences that caused them, in a journal.

With this you can more easily prepare for your next time of prayer or it can be of assistance if you take the opportunity to discuss your prayer experience with a pastor or other spiritual guide.

(With thanks to Vince Hurley, SJ.)

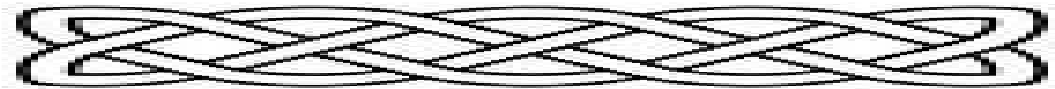
On Prayer

Prayer is a dangerous business. Too often we think of prayer as something sanitized and “safe”. The more we sit with God, the more we open ourselves up to transformation, renewal and redemption. This can leave us feeling less in control and can even be scary, an experience expressed beautifully by C.S Lewis in the passage below. Yet as Helen Keller says, “Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.” Certainly through prayer God calls us to life.

It is always shocking to meet life where we thought we were alone. 'Look out!' we cry, 'it's alive'. And therefore this is the very point at which so many draw back - I would have done so myself if I could - and proceed no further with Christianity. An 'impersonal God' - well and good. A subjective God of beauty,

truth and goodness, inside our own heads - better still. A formless life-force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap - best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the cord, perhaps approaching at an infinite speed, the hunter, king, husband - that is quite another matter. There comes a moment when the children who have been playing at burglars hush suddenly: was that a real footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion ('Man's search for God!') suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? We never meant it to come to that! Worse still, supposing He had found us?

- from *Miracles* by C.S Lewis



1 Samuel 3:1-10

Psalm 8

Hosea 11:1-9

Luke 15: 11-32

John 9:1-12

