

Reflections While Walking

Discovering Jesus



For years I've been making my annual retreat with the Trappist monks of Saint Joseph's Abby in Spencer Mass. Unfortunately, I was unable to do so last year because they suspended all retreats as a cautionary measure due to the pandemic. I am hoping they will resume later this year.

One of the more celebrated Trappist of modern times is Thomas Merton. Merton wrote, "His one image is in us all and we discover Him by discovering the likeness of His image in one another."

It is the responsibility of every Christian to recognize Jesus' presence in our enemy as well as our friend, in those who are front page fodder for the media as well as those who live in obscurity. We are asked to recognize Jesus in those who have earned the rewards this world has to offer as well as those for whom the good things of this world have passed them by. We are asked to recognize Jesus in those whose lives are relatively free of pain and sadness as well as those who receive more than their share of tragedy and hardship. When we discover Jesus' presence in each of our fellow humans, we are both transformed - our neighbor into someone deserving of our love and we into a source God's own love.

The grace to see Jesus in those around us is not the exclusive privilege of the clergy, religious, or those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, nor is it the exclusive privilege of the mystical Thomas Mertons of the world. Jesus is waiting for each of us to discover that part of him that resides in each of our neighbors and resides in each of us also. So, like Merton and others, we too pray this day and every day that we be granted the grace to see in each and every person we meet today and all days the likeness of Christ's image. "His one image is in us all and we discover Him by discovering the likeness of His image in one another."