

FINDING LIGHT...AND LITTLE MIRACLES

by Jean Glaraton

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

Each day at 11a, I read the virus numbers for our state. Until recently, they brought me comfort. This week, they have been horrifying. As a nurse, I cannot begin to imagine what is being asked of our hospital workers. I find it hard to stay upbeat. Yet I know it is vital to find a way through the darkness that descends all too quickly if I let it. Self-care for me includes weekly movement meditation. We have been gathering “on the screen,” and this morning’s session included a prayer poem well-known to me. Yet hearing it read aloud – one phrase, one movement at a time – struck me like a lightning bolt.

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

All I heard was **forgive them; be kind; succeed; be honest; create; be happy; do good; give your best.**

I did a bit of research and found that Mother Teresa’s version appears to have originated from a composition by Kent M. Keith written in 1968 and entitled *The Paradoxical Commandments*. The version found written on the wall of her home is more spiritual. However she first became aware of the words, they clearly animated and guided her.

We must be intentional in our faith and prayer life to keep it alive and healthy. Just as we choose to be open to seeing God in the daily tasks and life moments, so too must we seek the “little miracles.” Today’s horror is balanced by my dear friend’s apparent recovery from a miserable bout of CoVid, a sister’s biopsy results coming back benign, and the miraculous (her doctor’s word, not mine) healing of a church friend’s young daughter. On other days, it’s the miracle of a newborn baby, a conversation that snaps away the doldrums, the gift of food on the table, and knowing we have a food distribution system in our community that is available to all those who are hungry.

We do not know what words or experiences will comfort and inspire us. These days – just as for Mother Teresa – the call to action is life and death. Our task is to be open and answer that call. And to do our part for the good of all. Nothing less will do in these perilous times.



People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

Read the words of Mother Teresa aloud. Pause after each phrase.

Reread each phrase. Which one speaks to you in this moment?

Read that phrase again. What is stirring in you? What is your call to action?

How can you respond?

Immense God, we come to you with hearts heavy and burdened. We are weary. The road ahead feels dark. Speak to us. Guide us with Your light. Open our ears to hear and our eyes to see. Help us find courage to do what is being asked of us, and compassion to be present to others in need. May we recognize and share the little miracles, that all might know of Your loving goodness that will prevail. Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

