



Blessed Be

August 2019

Welcome to this edition of Blessed Be. Our next edition will be our Christmas edition, and we will be contemplating God's coming amongst us. If you have anything that speaks to you of the season that you would like to share with us, please feel free to contact me at: helenlmacauley@gmail.com

First up from Sheila Hawthorn we have:

Prayer for the Journey of Healing

(A contribution to the nation from the WA Reconciliation Inter-faith Working Group)

God of all creation, we who have come from every land give thanks for Australia;
This earth that feeds us;
The shore that binds us;
The skies that envelop us in freedom.

We stand together, united as one people;
Proud of our ability to work together;
Grateful for our gifts;
Nourished by our diversity and our harmony.

Yet we turn to the original owners of our land, and see, too, what we have taken.
We weep for their loss of freedom, of country, of children – even of their very lives.
We stand in awe of their survival, and in debt for their land.

We have shadows in our history which if unfaced diminish us.
We have taken without asking;
Our nation has taken without asking;
Lives are wounded.
We see the pain, feel the sorrow and seek forgiveness.

Let us look back with courage, see the truth and speak it.
Let us look around with compassion; see the cost and share it.
Let us look forward with hope; see what can be and create it.

Give us courage to face the truth
Compassion to share the burden,
Strength to play our part in the healing,
And hope to walk forward to a place of justice.

With courage, compassion, strength and hope,
We will walk together on the journey of healing.

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of these does not know that the hand of God has done this?

Job 12:7-9

Elizabeth Lee has sent us this piece to contemplate and reflect on:

Contemplative Photography in Spiritual Companionship.



Image from: <https://www.lifegate.com/app/uploads/kintsugi21.jpg>

I am part of a 40-minute lunch time “Connect and Reflect” Contemplative Dialogue circle that meets each Thursday lunch time at Pitt St Uniting Church, an inner-city church in Sydney.

We commence with 10 minutes’ meditation. Then each person introduces themselves and answers an opening question, on this occasion “where have you recently seen beauty?”

Then I placed a photo on the centre table., an example of the Japanese art of Kintsugi whereby a broken piece of pottery is repaired with gold.

I posed a series of questions, each person invited to share their response. No discussion, just intentional, attentive listening and pausing.

1. As you gaze upon the picture what do you notice?
2. What is evoked within you?
3. How does it connect with what is going on in your life at present?
4. We then paused, honouring what has been shared and noticed, what has shifted for us in our time together. Participants were then invited to share their noticings.
5. Following a brief time of silence gratitude is named.

I was overwhelmed by the insights shared and the wisdom revealed. What a graced experience!

I invite you to gaze upon the image and ask yourself the same questions and notice what rises within you.

Sheila Hawthorn has given us this piece by Dag Hammarskjold out of Markings:

To have humility is to experience reality, not *in relation to ourselves*, but in its sacred independence. It is to see, judge and act from the point of rest in ourselves. Then, how much disappears, and all that remain fall into place.

In the point of rest, in the centre of our being, we encounter a world where all things are at rest in the same way. Then a tree becomes a mystery, a cloud a revelation, each man and woman a cosmos of whose riches we can only catch glimpses. The life of simplicity is simple, but it opens to us a book in which we never get beyond the first syllable.

A Prayer of Compassion adapted and changed from the singular to plural by Mother Teresa from the original prayer poem **Radiating Christ** by Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890):

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go. Flood our souls with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly, that our lives may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through us, and be so in us, that every person we should come in contact with may feel your presence in our soul. Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus.

Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine; so to shine as to be a light to others; the light, Jesus, will be all from you. None of it will be ours. It will be you shining on others through us.

Let us thus praise you in the way you love best, by shining on those around us.
Let us preach you without preaching: not by words, but by our example,
by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do, the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear for you.
Amen.

*This year, the, Jewish day of mourning, the Ninth of Av, fell in August. It is a time to remember the loss of the temple, the times of persecution, the holocaust.... **Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi** has written this prayer for the occasion. It is a prayer that, with little modification, we could all say.*

Comfort, Yah our God, those who mourn Your sacred House; those who feel their own losses and the lost lives of their loved ones; those who live in Jerusalem, promised to be the City of Peace, the beginning of the total redemption. Although the Holy City is now in the hands of Israel, there is fear of violent attack in the hearts of her inhabitants. While other nations have yet to consent to her integrity, we Jews have yet to learn to live in peace with each other, with our neighbours and with other religions and peoples who claim their share in her.

Comfort us, Yah, Great God, awesome One, with that holy vision of the House of Prayer for all Peoples. Place into our hearts feelings of respect and kinship of each people and creed for its counterpart. May we all become aware that we are Your creation and that Your Glory is exalted through diverse hymns which form harmonies to the Anthem of the Sabbath. May it be granted us that anyone entering the gates of the Holy City be fully comforted, doubly consoled!

We praise You Yah, Who, while consoling Zion, builds Jerusalem! AMEN!

<https://www.patheos.com/resources/additional-resources/2009/07/prayers-for-the-ninth-of-av>

*Now some words by **Thomas Merton** from **New Seeds of Contemplation**:*

Our vocation is not simply to *be*, but to work together with God in the creation of our own life, our own identity, our own destiny. We are free beings and sons of God. This means that we should not passively exist, but actively participate in His creative freedom, in our own lives, and in the lives of others, by choosing the truth. To put it better, we are even called to share with God the work of *creating* the truth of our identity

Prayer of Alberta Lucker (*The Grail, Germany*)

People call You by many names
and praise You in many forms;
they express their respect through different signs
and their love in different ways.

While You remain the Unchanging, the One ever at work,
the inexhaustible Giver of Life, the One who ever fascinates.

You allow those who seek to find You
and lead the thirsty to the well.

For the lonely You are both Mother and Father,
For the fearful, Strength.

You enlighten the darkness of the void.
You give Yourself to those who love in overflowing fullness.

Prayer by Miriam Therese Winter *from Women Witness: Legendary Women*

Wherever I go,
Eternally present One,
You go before me,
Behind me,
Within me,
And I find strength in the knowledge
That I will never be alone.
Like a pillar of fire
That lights my way
Or a pillar of cloud.
Day after day
I depend on You
For all that I need
For comfort
For survival.
Be with me tangibly,
Speak to me audibly,
Show your love visibly,
So that now and forever
Your people will be my people
And You will always be my God.

And finally, some words from Clare of Assisi:

What you hold, may you always hold. What you do, may you always do and never abandon. But with swift pace, light pace, unswerving feet, so that even your steps stir up no dust, may you go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness.

