



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast for July 18, 2021

“Celtic Contemplative Spirituality” (There is a Time for Everything)

More than ever the word about Jesus spread, and crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. But Jesus would withdraw to deserted places and pray. (Luke 5:15-16)

If we are to be “Christ-like,” we must follow Jesus’s example who, when drawn into the demands of the world, he would go to spend quiet time by himself and in prayer.

We are easily trapped into the demands of our world: be successful at work, raise a family, participate in civic activities, devote time to our churches, and so forth. And what we do, must be at a fast pace, wasting no time. It can be done, but it can also be overdone, if we do not take time to care for ourselves. And if we don’t take care of ourselves, we can’t care for anyone else either.

Simply Be With God: The Practice of Contemplation and Meditation

The Celtic saints, especially Cuthbert, direct us to a contemplative spirituality which strikes a balance between DOING (the world’s work) and BEING (with God). This requires a mindfulness to understand what we are called to do, both for ourselves and others. Taking time for solitude, meditation, and prayer are just as important as eating and sleeping. Our souls suffer when we are out of balance. Here is an old Celtic tale illustrating the message:

A wise old Celtic monk who was meditating in the forest, enjoying the creatures and creation around him. A hunter who knew the monk came across him in the forest. “Why are you wasting time out here,” the hunter asked, “when there are things that need to be done and people who need to be cared for? This is a frivolous waste of time when there is so much to do.”

The monk turned to the hunter and said, “Put an arrow in your bow and release it.” The hunter did so. “Put in another and release it,” said the monk, and the hunter did so. “And another,” the monk said. Again and again, the monk instructed the hunter to string an arrow in his bow and release it. After a short time, the hunter turned to the monk and said, “If I keep working my bow like this, it will soon break! It will be good for nothing.”

“Indeed, you are right,” the wise monk said to the hunter. “You know your equipment well: a bow that is too often strung tight without rest will soon break. And so it is with God’s children.”

A Prayer for Balance

God, you have marvelously created us and the earth and the creatures that surround us. Grant us the wisdom to know when to work and when to rest, when to sleep and when to wake, when to start and when to stop. Help us recall your words of old: “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven. May it be so. AMEN.

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