

THE JOURNEY INWARDS :

*The appendix from "The Longest Journey" - by JOHN DALRYMPLE
(Fr Jock's Uncle)*

I sit before you, Lord, upright and relaxed, with a straight spine, allowing my weight to descend vertically through my body to the ground on which I am sitting.

I fix my mind within my body. I resist that urge of my mind to career out of the window to every other place but this one, and to career forwards and backwards in time away from the present. Gently and firmly I keep my mind where my body is: here in this room.

In this present moment I let go all plans, worries, anxieties. I place them now in your hands, O Lord. I release my grip on them and allow you to take them over. For the moment I leave them to you.

I wait on you, passive and expectant.

You come towards me, and I let you carry me.

I begin the journey inwards. I travel down inside me to the inmost core of my being, where you dwell. In this deep centre of my being you are there before me, ceaselessly creating and energizing my whole person.

You, God, are dynamic

You are within me.

You are here.

You are now.

You are.

You are the ground of my being. I let go. I sink and merge into you. You overwhelm me. You flood my being. You take me over completely.

I let my breathing become this prayer of submission to you. My breathing, in and out, is the expression of my whole being. I do it for you, with you, in you. I have 'become' you. You have 'become' me. We breathe together.

And now I open my eyes to see you in the world of things and people. I resume responsibility for my future. I take up again my plans, worries, anxieties. Renewed in strength I go again on the journey outwards, no longer alone, but in partnership with the Creator.

2. A reflection offered by a parishioner

A Hand of Friendship

If your heart is for peace
and my heart is for peace
give me your hand.

Give me your hand,
so small a thing to ask,
and yet – so big.

If I let my hand,
touch
grasp
clasp
your hand,
then somehow
I have crossed
the Rubicon,
I cannot be the same,
I cannot be the same
if, in the clasping
of your hand,
I dare to raise
my head,
and look into your eyes,
and see a mirror image
of myself,
frightened of trusting
fearful of the unknown
scared to admit
your humanity,
to be open and vulnerable,
lest I am invaded,
taken over,
lest all “they”
have told me
over centuries
proves to be
true
about you...

Give me your hand.
O give me your hand
before the moment passes,
before the darkness overtakes,
and I discover
when it is too late,
that you were my sister,
you were my brother,
that together
we were being called
towards a future
bright with hope
and promise,
by the God
whose hand
forever reaches out
to you and me
in friendship,
and because of whom
we can never be the same.

And so,
may the peace of Christ
be with you,
and may He ever flow
between us
as I
give you
my hand.