



Unlocking our potential

Thérèse Garman *reflects on* John 20:19-end

One week after Easter, has our life changed? Are we living in the freedom and joy of the resurrection, or have we kept our doors firmly locked? The locked places are those inside us rather than around us. For every person, circumstance or idea we lock out, we actually lock ourselves in. What keeps you locked in? Is it fear, sadness, loss, possibly resentment or anger? Jesus has a habit of entering these locked places of our lives. He steps into our closed spaces unexpectedly, unbidden and sometimes even unwelcome. Present among us, he offers peace and breathes new life into us. He doesn't open the doors for us, but he gives us everything we need to enable us to open our doors ourselves to new life, a new way of being. If sadness has caused us to close our doors, Jesus is there in the midst of that pain: "Peace be with you," he says, and his breath, his Spirit, supports us through it all. Whatever the circumstances, Jesus turns up bringing peace. Life and peace are characteristics of the resurrection. They don't necessarily change the circumstances, but they enable us to face and live through those circumstances. So Jesus gives us his peace, his Spirit, and then sends us out. We have the freedom to unlock the doors of our inner world and walk into the fullness of his life.

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Lord, come with your peace and breathe new life into us; that our fears may be dispelled and our locked doors opened, enabling us to step out in the power of the Spirit to take the life and peace of the resurrection to others. Amen.

Let us pray – ACTS of prayer Part 2 – C is for contrition

by Kathryn Fleming

If our prayer begins with adoration, the very act of contemplating God's glory makes us horribly aware of our own shortcomings. We wish things were different, we wish we were different – and it's natural to lament. This is contrition – a recognition of the truth of our own brokenness, individual and collective, and an honest naming of it before God. Though it may feel a heavy burden, this is in fact a gift, a badge of authenticity.

Washington Irvine said: "There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness but of power... the messengers of overwhelming grief, deep contrition, unspeakable love." Our contrition is as much a part of the love affair between God and humanity as is our praise and worship, evidence of our longing for a relationship based on uncompromising honesty.

Of course, true contrition must lead into action – prayer is active! We lament what we are, but then take positive steps to become our better selves. 🙏

“God does not delay to hear our prayers because He has no mind to give; but that, by enlarging our desires, He may give us the more largely.”

Anselm of Canterbury (1033/4-1109), Benedictine monk, abbot, philosopher and theologian

Anselm of Canterbury

by Caroline Hodgson

St Anselm (1033/34-1109), who is commemorated on Friday, was an Italian Benedictine monk, abbot, philosopher, and theologian, generally considered to be the founder of scholasticism, a school of thought that dominated the Middle Ages.

At fifteen he hoped to enter monastic life but to his great distress his father wouldn't consent to it. At twenty-three he went travelling through Burgundy and France, ending

up at Bec Abbey in Normandy. He entered as a novice, and soon after wrote his first philosophical treatise. Eventually he became Abbot of Bec and subsequently (though initially reluctantly) Archbishop of Canterbury.

He was an important philosopher and theologian, who wrote many influential treatises, including two meditations on the nature of God, as well as *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God was a Man), a dialogue about sin and the importance of atonement for Christianity. 🙏