

## **Look at All the Chaos Around You**

### **And Be at Peace**

This past summer again we saw record heat. Fires ravaged Europe. Other than early in the 'fire' season which burned so much sacred land in New Mexico, the 'Land of Enchantment', for the North American Continent, it was just drought, drought, drought. In other places it was flood, flood, flood. We've had the most serious plague of any of our lifetimes, excepting those still around who experienced the Spanish Flu and they would have to be over one hundred and five years old. Temperatures, especially the farther north one goes are above normal, way above normal, for years. Earthquakes? Not many 'here' recently but tens of thousands have gone to be with Him in places like Turkey and Syria.

And then there is war.

A war so unjust and brutal, we have not seen the likes of it since WWII and the atrocities of the Nazis. It is even worse for the current prime defenders of democracy in our world, the people of Ukraine. And the ripple impact across the globe? Well, let's just say the increase in social security for those who depend on it was more than swallowed up by price increases in every basic necessity. The cost increase in medications since the first of this year is not only unjustifiable, but also hysterically higher.

So look around you and be happy? See the goodness in others?

Yes. Yes. Yes! My 'happy places' are few but oh so happy, beginning with being with my loved ones, my home and of course, 'the trail'.

Yesterday I hit the trail for the first time this year with snowshoes. Like riding a horse I fell right into the pattern and rhythm of walking on top of the snow. The trail had not yet been packed down by others so the workout was great. It was thirty-eight degrees and the sun was so bright. I ended up quickly in just my T Shirt, tying my coat around my waste. The natural beauty is so stunning where I walk and so diversified. Then there is 'the sea' never more than a hundred to two hundred yards away to the west from where I traverse.

Mostly there are the prayers I say as I walk or snowshoe, sometimes pleading, always for others first and foremost. One of my favorites is when I ask Him to care and bless those with chronic, incurable, and terminal illnesses. While I ask His grace and blessings on those who are ill, I plead that He take care of the caretakers first and foremost. Caretakers have the hardest job.

The sea. The sea. The sea. When I finished walking on top of the snow, (not quite the same as walking on water), I drove down the road which ends at the shoreline. The water was the deepest of navy blues, except the first one hundred yards out, where it was a 'Caribbean' quality blue. All the distant cliffs, points, and the bear cubs – the two main islands offshore,

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where covered in white. The sun He created lit them up in all His magnificent spectacular glory!  
And of course the sky was my favorite, Mary Madonna Blue!

When walking (or snowshoeing), going over that list of people in need, those I love, those that even hate me... when I am finished, I am always overwhelmed by this sense of calmness.

They and me are in His care. Of this I am sure, whatever the state of the world in all its chaos whether natural or driven by materialism or just the plain greed and meanness of others.

He loves us.

We should return the favor, telling Him constantly as we pray our way through life.

I follow on substack.com (the same writer's platform I use) an extraordinary writer, Alexandra Hudson. One of her latest missives was called *Storytelling is Freedom*. Midway through the article she talks about Victor Frankl.

*Frankl was sent to a concentration camp—Auschwitz—after he had been married for only nine months. His entire family was wiped out. He describes his experience in his book Man's Search for Meaning. He explains that though the guards who treated him and others so brutally and inhumanely could take away their physical freedoms—through imprisonment, torture, starvation—they could not take away their mental and psychological freedom. Frankl wrote, **"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."***

My own father was famous for this, detailing it often in his interview, transcribed by Mary into the book we called Faithful: Because of Love a True Story of the Survival of the Defenders of Bataan.

He said to the effect, "The will to survive, to live, is something so God-given, and it is in every one of us. Where an animal would have just rolled over on their backs, stuck their legs in the air and died, we chose to live despite the most horrific conditions ever faced by men in a POW camp."

So stop looking at the chaos around you. Be at peace by allowing His peace to enter into you, your soul. Know we are in His hands always.

All we have to do is trust, because He loves us so so so much, beyond earthspeak to describe.

The least we can do is love Him, by our words, thoughts and actions, by loving all of us created in His Image and Likeness.

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