

After the Chapter

Our Chapter is now behind us and we begin the distillation of its outcomes and recognise the presence of the Spirit in our deliberations. The contemplative dialogue which was a feature of the Chapter enabled us to engage in deep listening and to dwell in a powerful sense of our oneness across the Institute, with all creation and with God. This connectedness with God constantly calls us to be open to all that could be possible.

In the last weeks we have seen devastating droughts in Africa, floods in Bangladesh, Nepal and India, an earthquake in Mexico and horrifying hurricanes and flooding in Cuba, the Caribbean and southern United States. It feels so overwhelming! Yet the glory of God is everywhere and as Pope Francis reminds us: “We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which to hide...”ⁱ

Thomas Merton wrote: “The deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond words. It is beyond speech... My dear brothers and sisters, we are already one. But we imagine we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be, is what we are.”ⁱⁱ

As people of the resurrection, we are alive and participating in Jesus’ mission. “We are to throw open the doors and windows of our world, our place and time, so that the Spirit breath of the crucified and risen One can enter in everywhere.

Let us continue to hear the call to *communio*, “to be what we are” to one another - but more importantly “to be what we are” daughters of Catherine McAuley, at home in our deepest desires as we listen to “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Practise being hopeful, alone and with others, plant seeds of hope!

ⁱ Laudato Si #52

ⁱⁱ Thomas Merton, *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton*

ⁱⁱⁱ Pope Francis, Laudato Si #49



As Spring spreads glory across our lands, our senses awaken to the growth and colour in our gardens and in our surrounds. Earth sings of beauty and pulsates with life. We are reminded that the God of peace has planted within us an unwavering call to do justice, to deepen our sense of God and our oneness with creation.

Brian Swimme reminds us of why we are here and what lies within us, in partnership with the universe: *“Human generosity is possible only because at the centre of the solar system a magnificent stellar generosity pours forth free energy day and night without stop and without complaint and without the slightest hesitation. This is the way of the universe. This is the way of life.”*ⁱⁱⁱ So, creation itself is a model for our own ‘dance’ of mercy!

The word universe means one song, one psalm, one piece of music, one poem that we are all part and parcel of as it pours out in time and in our place. *“We live ... as beloved disciples and the friends of God. We are invited ever more personally and powerfully together into the dance of our God who dances Three and One.”*ⁱⁱⁱ

As we awaken to new understandings of the universe story, we are called to see and listen to relationships in new ways. Contemplative waiting and silence are ways that can open us to the connectedness of every aspect of life *“It holds truth humbly; it teaches one how to practise compassion, mercy, loving kindness, patience, forgiveness and humility.”*ⁱⁱⁱ

May we hear anew to the call that each of us listens to so intentionally as we ‘dance’ our song of mercy and justice? Might we take some advice from a volcano?



Stay active
It's ok to let off steam
Go with the flow
Be uplifting
It's all a matter of time
Keep your inner fire burning!ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱⁱ Brian Swimme. *The Thirteenth Labor: Improving Science Education*, Gordon and Breach Publishers. 1999.
<http://bit.ly/2idBbxF>

ⁱⁱⁱ Megan McKenna, *The Making of the Community of Beloved Disciples*. Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern, Washington D.C. 2017.

ⁱⁱⁱ Richard Rohr, *The Naked Now*, p.131-132

ⁱⁱⁱ Ilan Shamir *Your True Nature Bookmark*.

Anne McGuire, Patricia McDermott and Helen Glasheen
