

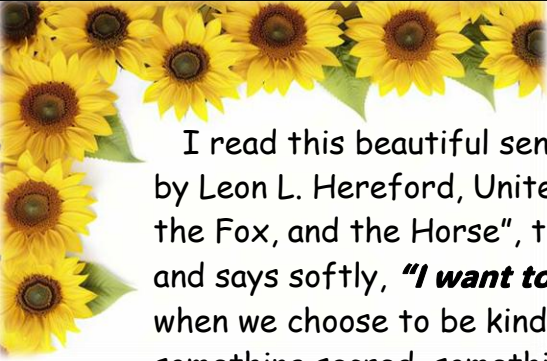
Of Seeds and Flowers

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"WHEN I GROW UP,
I WANT TO BE KIND."

I read this beautiful sentiment in the Contemplative Outreach News, Feb 2026. in an article by Leon L. Hereford, United Kingdom. "In the book by Charles Mackesy, "The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse", the boy is asked what he wants to be when he grows up. He pauses and says softly, **"I want to be kind."** There is such a simple truth in that answer, because when we choose to be kind, we choose to let love move through us. We become a part of something sacred, something that heals without needing to speak.

The horse says, **"Sometimes just getting up and carrying on is brave and magnificent."** And maybe that's all our time in prayer, in contemplation really asks of us-- to keep showing up, to open our hearts a little wider, and to trust that love, not fear, will lead the way.

Prayer becomes a way of breathing
Meditation becomes a way of listening
And kindness becomes the way we live
It is love made visible one small act at a time.

When we pause to pray or sit in silence, we are like the boy standing beside the horse learning again that **strength and gentleness can live in the same breath.** We learn that love is not far away; it is here right now in the space between one heartbeat and the next. So today as you gently move through "Of Seeds and Flowers" may we remember the boy's words. "When I grow up, I want to be kind." And may we all grow not just older but **softer**. "There are no great things, only small things done with great love." Mother Teresa

THE BEST PLACE TO PRAY, I asked an old monk, "How do I get over the habit of judging people? He answered, "When I was your age, I was wondering where would be the best place to go to pray. Well, I asked Jesus that question. His answer was, Why don't you go to the heart of the Father? So, I did, and all these years that's where I've prayed. Now I see everyone as my own child. How can I judge anyone?' This from Brother Theophane the Monk, Tales of a Magic Monastery

THE TWO HALVES OF LIFE from Richard Rohr: The task of the first half of life is to create a proper CONTAINER for one's life and answer the first essential questions: "What makes me significant?" "How can I support myself?" and who will go with me? The task of the second half of life is, quite simply, to find the actual CONTENTS that this container was

meant to hold and deliver. The container is not an end in itself but exists for the sake of your deeper and fullest life, which, by and large, you do not know about yourself. Far too many people just keep doing repair work on the container itself and never "throw their nets into the deep" (John 21:6) to bring in the huge catch that awaits them.

Dear Lord,

So far today, am I doing all right.



I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or self-indulgent. I have not whined, complained, cursed, or eaten any chocolate. I have charged nothing on my credit card.

But I will be getting out of bed in a minute, and I think that I will really need your help then.

The task of the FIRST HALF OF LIFE invests so much of our blood, sweat, eggs and sperm, tears and years that we often cannot imagine there is a second task, or that anything could be expected of us. "The old wineskins are good enough (Luke 5:39) we say, even though they often cannot hold the new wine. The container from the first half of life has to stretch and die in its present form or even replace itself with something better.

Various traditions use different metaphors to make the difference clear: beginners and proficient, novices and the initiated, juniors and seniors, apprentice, and master. **Only when you have begun to live in the second half of life can you see the difference between the two.** The two halves are cumulative and sequential, and both are very necessary. You cannot do a nonstop flight into the second half of life and no one can do it for you. No book, no guru, no psychological technique, no religious formula can do it for you. **And no political party or social movement can substitute for your own efforts.**

In our formative years, we are so concerned and **SELF-PREOCCUPIED** that we are both overly defensive and overly offensive at the same time, with little time left for simply living, pure friendship or useless beauty. We need to feel "special", we need our "narcissistic FIX". We all need some successes, affirmation and positive feedback early in life, or we will spend the rest of our lives DEMANDING IT. Or bemoaning its lack, from others.

One of my favorite stories tells of the meeting of two hermits, Father Daniel and Father Joseph. Father Daniel asked what else he must do to be perfect. He said that he ate little, slept little, prayed without ceasing, worked with his hands and shared whatever he had with the poor. What, he wondered, did he lack? Then Father Joseph rose and stretched out his arms and tongues of fire flashed from his fingers. "If you want", he said, "you can become a living flame".

Have you ever thought about the fact that you are TWO PEOPLE? -the **DREAM YOU** and the **REAL YOU**. The dream you doesn't really exist but you live most of your life with the dream you. The dream you is perfect in every way. The **REAL YOU** -IS THE REAL YOU you; the you in truth.

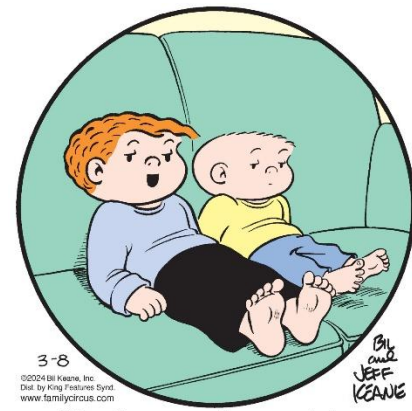
My dream me is the perfect husband, the perfect father, the perfect counselor, the perfect writer, the perfect grass cutter(I always cut the grass perfectly), the perfect book reader (I only read significant books), the perfect house painter and on and on it goes. THIS ME DOESN'T EXIST! This me is like a gas. Even God can't

"Juniors" on the first half of the journey invariably think that the true elder is naïve, simplistic, 'out of it", or just superfluous. (SOUND FAMILIAR?).

They cannot understand what they have not experienced. They cannot see beyond the tasks of the first half of life.

However, a person in the second half of life will always have a

patient understanding of the juniors and be helpful to them. Higher stages always empathetically include the lower, or they are not higher stages!!!



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"You know you're growin' up when your toes keep getting farther away."

ALMOST ALL OF CULTURE AND RELIGIOUS HISTORY has been concerned with first-half-of-life issues: the three big concerns of IDENTITY, SECURITY, SEXUALITY AND GENDER. (Looks like America) They don't preoccupy us: THEY TOTALLY TAKE OVER!!!

No one can say, "I'm a convert." There is no single act of conversion. We ALL are constantly in the process of being ine converted. **CONVERSION** is an ongoing **SPIRITUAL LIFE EXPERIENCE!**

"One cannot live the **afternoon of life** according to the **program** of life's **morning**; for what was great in the **morning** will be of little importance in the evening, and what in the **morning** was true will at evening have become a lie."

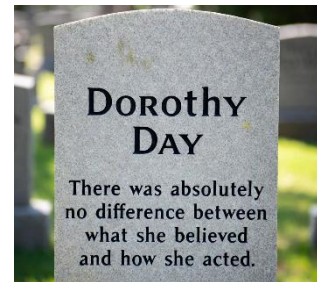
— Carl Jung, "The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche"

love this me. This dream me is always pushing me around. It is always pushing me to be more and more perfect; to do more and more PERFECT THINGS, and **this me is never happy**. It is like a monkey on my back. So much so I even named the dream me, ALEXANDER, after Alexander the Great. —riding on a great white horse conquering all things. Alexander is never happy and He can make my life VERY miserable.

Alexander and I regularly have some tough conversations. “Get off my back; stop pushing me around; let me alone; you are a brute; get out of my life, etc. etc..

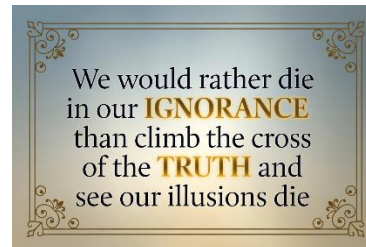
The truth about me is: Sometimes I’m the perfect father and sometimes I’m not, sometimes I cut the grass perfectly and sometimes not, sometimes I’m the perfect husband and sometimes I’m not etc.. The more I pray the more I find out about my selfishness, my pride, my need for control and be right about everything, my need for security and affirmation and power. The Holy Spirit is the revealer. She/He lets me know about the real me.

The only me that is real is the REAL ME. **The only me that even God can love is the real me.** Centering prayer/contemplation is what keeps me honest. One hour a day and I am able to hug and like the real me.



Check out Centering Prayer in Contemplative Outreach or our Mary’s field library of podcasts on YouTube. It is the source of true freedom. The Divine Therapist will touch and heal your beautiful heart and soul. Serious prayer will open your heart to the real you and the **REALITY in which you are swimming**. It is OK to be the real you. This the YOU that God loves.

St. Paul wrote some powerful words to Timothy that might help and fit ALLOF US, in these brutal days. *“Do not forget this: there will be terrible times in the last days. (not sure these are the last days, but the words do apply)”*



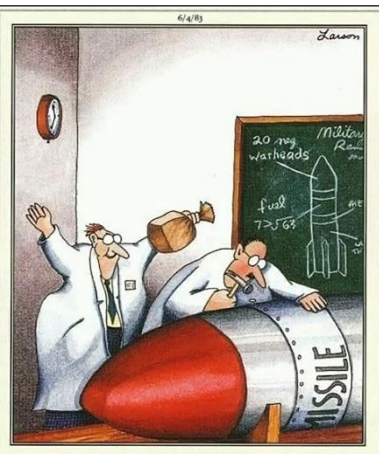
*Men will be lovers of self and of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful profane, inhuman, implacable, slanderous, licentious, brutal, hating the good. They will be treacherous, reckless, and swollen with pride, lovers of pleasure rather than of God. They will keep up the outward appearance of religion but **will have rejected the inner power of it**. Stay clear of them. It is such as these who worm their way into homes and make captives of weak women burdened by the guilt of their sins and driven by desires of many kinds, always learning but never able to reach a knowledge of the truth.” Please blame Paul for these words, not me. Thank you. Interesting, because much of today’s social unrest is, by study after study, reported to be white college educated women. Please, please, no letters. Blame the studies.*

Most Catholics don’t really know what is happening at Mass. But, “Ascension”, on your phone or computer, has a priest Fr. Edward Sri, who is marvelously teaching in 30 days about the prayers and parts of the Mass. Every Catholic School, right through the University, should have their students listen to this presentation. So many Catholics go to Mass and don’t know what is really happening. PUNCH IN and GO TO CHURCH THIS SUNDAY knowing more about what is really happening. Don’t forget CHOSEN. 282 million viewers so far. It will give a big life to your spiritual life.

A man approaches a monk passing by his village and says, “Give me the stone, the precious stone you have in your sack. I had a vision last night that a monk would pass by my village about noon and he would give me a precious stone he had in his sack. The stone would make me the richest man in the world.”

The monk replied, “I found this stone the size of a man’s head laying in the woods. Is this the stone you mean?” “Yes”, replied the man. The man took the stone from the monk, and he headed home to his village. Despite his feelings of good fortune, he couldn’t sleep all night.” Who would find out about my luck.” “Would someone steal my stone?” “Will my richness change me?” “Will my friends not like me?” etc.

He couldn’t handle his upset, so the next day he tracked down the monk and asked him to take back the stone. The monk asked him, “Is there anything I can do for you?” The villager responded, “Instead of the stone, can you **give me the grace and power that gave you the FREEDOM to give the stone away so easily.**”



The Litany of/for
Humility is a prayer we
ALL NEED on a DAILY
basis. - or 2X's a day!!
TIME TO
PRAYERFULLY FIND
THE "REAL ME". -Get
converted!!

"man looks at outward appearance...
God looks at the heart"

—God, 1 Samuel 16:7

Common folk are only a **breath**,
Great men an **illusion**.
Placed in the scales, they rise:
They weigh less than a **breath**.
Do not set your heart on riches.
Even when they **increase**.



Recycle this issue.
Share with a friend.



Litany of Humility

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, Hear me.
From the desire of being esteemed,
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being loved...
From the desire of being extolled ...
From the desire of being honored ...
From the desire of being praised ...
From the desire of being preferred to others...
From the desire of being consulted ...
From the desire of being approved ...
From the fear of being humiliated ...
From the fear of being despised...
From the fear of suffering rebukes ...
From the fear of being calumniated ...
From the fear of being forgotten ...
From the fear of being ridiculed ...
From the fear of being wronged ...
From the fear of being suspected ...
That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I ...
That, in the opinion of the world,
others may increase and I may decrease ...
That others may be chosen and I set aside ...
That others may be praised and I unnoticed ...
That others may be preferred to me in everything...
That others may become holier than I,
provided that I may become as holy as I should.



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