

Monthly Prayer World DIAKONIA November 2015

As I prepare the November Monthly Prayer for World Diakonia I am enjoying a few days Retreat with some colleagues, mainly Deacons, in the Uniting Church in Australia. We are at a house that the Deacon community in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania own in a bayside suburb of Melbourne. We did this last year as well and it has become a very important time for us all. I expect it will become a regular part of our yearly routine.

We have the opportunity of 'retreating' from the busyness of daily ministry engagement and locations in order to refresh ourselves for the ongoing journey. We have talked and laughed together; we have caught up with what is happening in our different locations, and we have encouraged and supported each other. Our time together is also our prayer with and for each other.

It is getting towards the end of Spring in this part of the world and our Retreat is at a time when the season of the year has changed from the cold of winter into the freshness of the new life that comes with Spring. What a gift it is to have the opportunity of being together in order to refresh our Hearts, Minds and Spirits in preparation for Advent and our new liturgical year.

I wonder how many of us are able to take this sort of opportunity. Often the busyness of our ministries mean that we run from one thing to the next, perhaps not taking the time to stop and ponder the nature of the journey that God is leading us on. We know that there are many demands on our lives, there are numerous needs all around us that demand our response – and rightly so. But taking time out in the midst of our busyness is essential. For, how can we respond faithfully if we do not take the time to connect and reconnect with God, the source of our lives and the One who calls us beyond ourselves out into the world. God calls us to be witnesses in a world which is crying out for peace, justice, compassion and love. I offer the following prayer by Kate McIlhagga for this month in the hope that you will be encouraged to take time to stand aside from your daily tasks and think deeply about the call of the One who sustains us through all things. Hopefully it is also one you can share with the people of your communities.

Witnesses

Creator God, maker of all,
move within us,
bringing insight and strength,
that we may witness to your saving power
and work with you
to create a new heaven and a new earth.

We stand with you against injustice

Risen Christ, fulfiller of promises,
raise us to work with you,
that your children
may not be forced to plant
for another to eat,
or bear sons and daughters
to die hungry in their arms.

We stand with you against injustice.

Spirit of integrity,
inspire us to work
to prevent the rape of the environment,
to safeguard the delicate balance of your creation,
that the whole earth may cry glory
and witness to the victory of Christ.
We stand with you against injustice.

***Creating, sustaining, saving God,
make whole your people and your creating,
in the name of the Trinity of Love.***

Kate McIlhagga.

Kate McIlhagga, *The Green Heart of the Snowdrop*, Glasgow, Wild Goose Publications, 2004, p182.

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