

DIAKONIA Prayer Letter August

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.' Then he said to them, 'You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition!

Mark 7: 1-8

The world is full of strange habits that we label 'traditions '. Over the past 18 months we have all introduced "new traditions", from the use of hand sanitiser to face masks, from keeping 2m apart to not shaking hands or hugging. I read somewhere that it only takes around 8 weeks to form a habit. Which of your new found traditions are in keeping with God? Which of our old ones do we understand? As the world slowly emerges (albeit at different rates) from this pandemic maybe now is a good time to examine our habits - new and old.

Loving God,

As we gather as a scattered yet united DIAKONIA help us to focus on you. We come to you not with empty rituals, doctrines or traditions but with open hearts. King and Lord of the Church rule over us with Justice, Equity and seek out our wickedness.

As we seek your kingdom around the world, give us ears willing to listen, eyes- not only open, but looking and seeing, that our hearts are ready to receive each other, ready for a DIAKONIA of action.

Help us to examine our own ways and to look to our hearts as we embrace the challenges ahead.

As we are changed by you God, let us relax and breathe safe in the knowledge that your ways are our ways.

Our closing prayer are the 'traditional words' of St Francis of Assisi:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.*

Deacon Gordon Pennykid, DRAE Secretary, Scotland