

Be at peace then ~ Midweek reflection # 35, Feb 11, 2009

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 NRSV

“Do not look forward to the changes and chances of this life in fear; rather look to them with full hope that, as they arise, God, whose you are, will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hitherto, ~ do you but hold fast to His dear Hand, and He will lead you safely through all things; and, when you cannot stand, He will bear you in His arms. Do not look forward to what may happen to-morrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today, will take care of you to-morrow, and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.”

~ St. Francis De Sales, quoted in Daily Strength for Daily Needs, selected by Mary Wilder Tileston, Grosset & Dunlap

Living focused on today rather than anticipating what will happen tomorrow is not always easy. During the past nine months I have often turned to the scriptures for the strength to “hand-off” to a loving Father my fears and anxieties about tomorrow ~ which doesn’t yet exist ~ and to rest in God’s perfect love, to trust in the presence of God’s Holy Spirit for this day’s needs. I’m finding that God’s presence and grace are always sufficient for this day’s joys and trials.

I suppose it is a matter of faith. Frederick Buechner reminds us that faith is always a response to the “given-ness” of God’s grace. We don’t initiate the relationship with God. We can respond, when we are attentive, with active faith to God’s gracious promises. And faith, as the eleventh chapter of Hebrews teaches, is always a matter of acting, no matter how many questions and doubts we live with, on what we understand of God’s revealed will.

Grace, then, leads to faith. Faith in action leads to peace! “Be at peace then.” and have a good day enjoying the everlasting Father, whose arms are ready to bear you.

“For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you’.” Isaiah 41:13 NRSV

Under God’s Mercy,

Howie