

Tending the Garden

Our life journey is much like tending a garden. We can seed or plant the garden, weed it, *water* it, fertilize it, but it is up to God to make it grow, to let it flourish or, to let it wither and die.

The point is, in our relationship with God, we have responsibilities which are found in all situations that would be termed a partnership. What are God's responsibilities.. .and what are mine? Just as we may be the gardeners in this relationship/partnership with God, it is up to Him to make it grow.

St. Ignatius wrote: "Pray as if every thing depends on God and work as though everything depends on me." An adaptation of that saying is the popular Serenity Prayer:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change...

What are the chief causes of my anxieties? Do I have any control over these people, things, circumstances? Am I willing to let go of what I cannot control?

The courage to change the things I can...

What do I control? What can I do about my situation? I can always control my attitude, the way I relate to people, places, things, circumstances. How do I need to change my attitude?

And the wisdom to know the difference...

Knowing what is my business, what is the other person's business, and what is God's business hard. If I cannot change something, I need to let it go. I ask God's help to do so in trust.

Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time...

Am I now/here? If not, I am no/where. I ask the grace to be attentive to the NOW in loving readiness.

Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace. Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it...

My cross is the burden that loving commitment has brought me. Do I accept my crosses? Do I see how rejecting them makes me and others miserable? Do I know that crosses lead to growth?

Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to his will...

Do I trust God to care for things if I let go of control? Have I yet learned that his plans for me are best? Do I believe that in his will is my happiness. I ask for growth in faith.

That I may be reasonably happy in this life...

Happiness is a consequence of living here-now-in-love. Am I unconditionally happy? Who do I blame for my unhappiness? Do I see that it is the way I react to life that causes happiness and unhappiness? I ask the grace to take responsibility for my own happiness.

And supremely happy with Him forever...

“The sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us” (Romans 8:18). Do I cling to this life? Do I fear death? Does the prospect of heaven give me hope and joy? I ask for the grace to be hopeful.

