

Sat Chit Anand

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Spiritual Friendship



*We are pilgrims on the journey
 We are brothers on the road
 We are here to help each other
 Walk the mile and bear the load*

*I will hold the Christ light for you
 In the night time of your fear
 I will hold my hand out to you
 Speak the peace you long to hear.*

*I will weep when you are weeping
 When you laugh, I'll laugh with you
 I will share your joy and sorrow
 Till we've seen this journey through.
 [From the Servant Song]*

*Photo: African Trinity Statue
 embracing in circle of love*

Saint Aelred of Rievaulx Abbey in the UK, was well known for his writing on friendship: ascending from that holy love with which we embrace a friend to that with which we embrace God. Such love is holy and sacred, for in loving one another, we may know the love of God. Treasure your spiritual friends for they raise you up ... Having once received a person in friendship I cannot do otherwise than love him, the companion of my soul, he said.

*There is no life, no life without its hunger; Each restless heart beats so imperfectly;
 But when you come and I am filled with wonder, Sometimes, I think I glimpse eternity.*

“It is no small consolation in this life to have someone to whom you can be united in the intimate embrace of the most sacred love; in whom your spirit can rest; to whom you can pour out your soul; in whose delightful company, as in a sweet consoling song, you can take comfort in the midst of sadness; in whose most welcome, friendly bosom you can find peace in so many worldly setbacks; to whose loving heart you can open, as freely as you would to yourself, your innermost thoughts; through whose spiritual kisses – as by some medicine – you are cured of the sickness of care and worry; who weeps with you in sorrow, rejoices with you in joy, and wonders with you in doubt; whom you draw by the fetters of

love into that inner room of your soul, so that though the body is absent, the spirit is there, and you can confer all alone, the two of you, in the sleep of peace away from the noise of the world, in the embrace of love, in the kiss of unity, with the Holy Spirit flowing over you; to whom you so join and unite yourself that you mix soul with soul, and two become one." [Saint Aelred of Rievaulx]

This is the union we all long for, and our human relationships reflect our longing for, and can lead us to, Divine Love, so that we can ... ascend from that holy love with which we embrace a friend to that with which we embrace God, and in the end there is no distinction for all is part of God. Rumi wrote: *"Borrow the Beloved's eyes. Look through them and you will see the Beloved's face everywhere."* We were created in love and for love, and when love is in you, you are one with Love. The desire to give and receive love is one of the most authentic and natural desires, and the better we love, the happier we are. The purpose of human existence is to awaken and grow in consciousness, and thus to manifest holy love, energy and grace in all our relationships. *"The greatest thing you'll ever learn, is just to love and be loved in return."* [Nature Boy, song by Nat King Cole]

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains; You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders; You raise me up ... to be more than I can be.*

Our life's journey is a journey from love, in love, towards love. Theologian John Dunne, quoting the words which a desert Bedouin spoke to T. E. Lawrence of Arabia, said: "The love is from God and of God and towards God: It is the great circle of love: the love is from God and of God and towards God, that is embodied and expressed in the great circle of story and song. Love's direction then is towards reunion, for the great circle is from God and towards God, and at the point of greatest distance from God, the point of greatest loneliness, where we are now in time, it turns out that God is with us, that loneliness becomes love, that life is a journey with God in time."

Thanks be to God for this never-ending circle of love, and for all those who are part of it, and manifest it in our lives. May you always draw a circle around the ones you love. Never draw a heart, because hearts can be broken, but circles are never ending! *May the gift of love be poured into our hearts, so that we, clasping each other's hand, may share the joy of friendship, human and divine, and be part of, and draw many into, the circle and community of love ...*

*I sought my soul, but my soul I could not see.
I sought my God, but my God eluded me.
I sought my friend, and I found all three.
[Unknown]*

SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP was the topic of October's Faith Sharing (last Tuesday of the month)

OM SHANTI, MAY PEACE AND LOVE BE WITH YOU, LEELA

Peace meditation and gratitude gathering

at 11h00 on 11.11.2011 more details next week

Spiritual Retreats anytime

<http://www.satchitanand.co.za/programme.htm>

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