



Restoration
MINISTRIES



Dear Friends,

Lent, Holy Week, Easter 2015! Daily we are presented with images from around the world of terrorism, the slaughter of the innocents, the forward, relentless thrust of an inhumanity that can only be described as naked evil. It would be so easy to be overwhelmed and to feel that, out of all the springtimes in our lives, this is the one that is most devoid of hope, the one that calls up from deep within us so many hidden, unacknowledged fears. It would be so easy to switch off to the anguish that we see daily via the media, to close our ears to the silent scream of millions whose only 'fault' has been to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, resulting in brutal loss of home, livelihood, country, life itself. It would be so easy because it's too painful; it's too horrific; we feel powerless to do anything; to think about it too much could drive us insane.

This is such a very natural human reaction that I confess to falling into periodically over the last weeks. Yet, at the same time, there is another drumbeat, perhaps much more faint and distant, but becoming more insistent as the days go by. As I reflect on the passion, the death, the resurrection of Jesus, the two images that keep emerging are those of stillness and littleness. In the midst of all the noise and clamour of Holy Week, the only point of stillness that reaches us is that found within Jesus himself. On the Friday from the cross, it is his silence that speaks louder than words for all of time and of eternity. On Easter Day, in the radiance of a Spring morning, the stillness vibrates with his aliveness – and nothing can ever be the same, as past, present and future are infused with outrageous hope. Central to his life was his communion with God. It is this abiding that holds him through the worst and that is indestructible. He dwells in the Father's presence. And it is this awareness that he invites humankind to also – that we dwell in him and he in us. We are invited to that place of abiding, to discover that still place in the turning world of our day and, in the midst of all that is

happening, to be found again by outrageous hope. The way of Jesus is not one of power and control but of littleness and vulnerability. In littleness and vulnerability he came and lived and died. He rose again, not to the sound of trumpets, with glory and majesty and loud acclaim, but in the guise of a gardener in the cemetery, of a pilgrim on the road, of a stranger on the shore. And it is through the paradoxical power of such littleness, weakness and stillness that the world is transformed.

As we risk letting go enough to be in stillness, as we dare to let go of some of the internal baggage that shores up our self-protection, as we allow ourselves to be little and let God be God, we too may be surprised by the joy of a Spring morning, by presence in the stillness, and in the ordinary stuff of living be seized by an outrageous hope. We may also, without us being fully conscious of what is happening, become agents of transformation in this shining, wonderful, terrible world that is gift to all of us. The key lies in becoming aware of the sacred space that can only be found in stillness and littleness. Victor Frankl, who survived the death camp at Auschwitz wrote in his book *Man's Search for Meaning* "Between a stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom." And the multiple effect of such 'space exploration' points to growth and freedom for the whole world.

May we be gifted with hearing the music that is soundless and keep step with its transformative rhythm. Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.



Ruth

HAPPY EASTER,
DEAR FRIENDS.



Quiet Peacemakers'
Exhibition
at
Belfast City Hall.

A panel with:
Ken Newell, Derek Poole,
Gerry Reynolds &
Ruth Patterson
with Lord Mayor of
Belfast, Nichola Mallon
& Susan Hughes



In April of last year Susan Hughes launched an exhibition of 32 portraits entitled The Quiet Peacemakers. Since then this exhibition has been on tour providing many opportunities for people to meet and share their hopes and dreams for peace. The tour concluded with an exhibition in the Belfast City Hall in December 2014.

Susan Hughes writes -

I found that beneath the radar of the big events of the Peace Process are networks of ordinary people moving mountains in courageous and imaginative ways. And so I began this venture to pay homage to them and celebrate them in the best way I know how: through art...

I hope this exhibition will celebrate them, and perhaps challenge a new generation of Quiet Peacemakers.



If you wish to make a donation to Restoration Ministries, you can do so through the 'myDonate' on our website. We appreciate your continuing generosity towards our work and are always grateful for every donation, no matter how small. Such gifts enable us to keep on keeping on that little bit longer.



Ruth will be presenting
Thought for the Day - Radio Ulster

Palm Sunday – 29th March

Easter Sunday – 5th April

Sundays - 12th & 19th April



FAITH & FRIENDSHIP

We are delighted to announce a new F& F group in the Glenavy/ Crumlin area.

For details contact
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office@restorationministries.co.uk