

A REFLECTION ON STEPS 1 AND 2 TOWARD HUMILITY

Benedict calls his Rule “a little rule for beginners.” It was established as a way for humans, who often fail despite their best intentions, to begin to answer the call of God.

This supposes that we

- Know God
- Listen to God, and
- Respond to God

Benedict included much about Humility in his little rule. Because if we learn humility, we will come to

- know God,
- listen to God and
- Respond to God.

Humility is the basis for right relationships in life.

Humility is not so much about individuals as it is about community ... about how individuals contribute to form a community that reflects God’s love and concern for each individual.

Am I an arm or a leg in God’s community? Do I KNOW and am I CONFIDENT in being an arm or a leg? If I am, I can function as the best arm or a leg that I can be, and by so doing – the body functions as God wishes.

God is within me – waiting to be realized.

How do I recognize the presence of God within me? By responding to God. By responding to the God of NOW in a real, daily way right NOW. Primarily through prayer. Prayer grounds me in God. Prayer is speaking and listening to God so that I will come to know God, listen to God and respond to God.

How does God respond to me? Many times in a most concrete way – through others. If my partner says to me – “you never listen to me”; if my child says to me “...you always play the martyr”, if my employer says to me, “ you need to adjust your attitude.” Is it always their

fault – or do I recognize that perhaps God is asking them to speak to me. Do I listen to God speaking to me through others? Am I responding to God's voice?

God searches our hearts and minds. What does God see in my heart and my mind? Does God see obedience, acceptance, respect, attentiveness, effort?

God is within me. The reality of living with God is that I don't try to change what God is doing in my life. I don't respond to God by changing the agenda – or by ignoring the agenda. The best thing I can do is accept what God is giving me and by living through it, I can contribute to my community by reflecting the God within me.

If I accept the encouragement God gives me, than I can bloom in place. I don't have to move, change, rearrange or ignore God's wishes for me and my life. I don't need to FORCE change. But I can ACCEPT change If that is what God is giving me. If I can accept that God is God and I am not. Jesus said: "I have come not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me." Can I do less?

IF I can accept that God is God, then I can let go. Letting go of myself and holding on to God casts out fear. I will be embracing a love so true, so honest, so fierce that there will be only room for love – and not fear. This isn't saying there will be no fear In my life – it is saying that when fear arises, I can reach out and hold onto God.

Living a life without fear means living a life at peace. With myself and with my community.

And these are just the first two steps toward humility!!

Learning about humility can be relatively easy. APPLYING what we have learned can be very, very difficult. Because it forces us to look at ourselves as we really are – not who we pretend to be or who we want to be – but who we are.

And once we truly recognize and accept who we are, we can use the 12 steps of Humility to transform ourselves into the person God is WAITING for and WANTING us to become.

Amen

Just before our closing prayer, I will ask a question for a five minute meditation before we pray.

Question: Do I hear God speaking to me through prayer, through others, through the circumstances around me?