

# TSP Express

*Habakkuk 2:2*

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\* <http://www.kdccw.org/TheSecretPlace.html>

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*I AM NOW GOING TO ALLURE HER  
I WILL LEAD HER INTO THE DESERT  
AND SPEAK TENDERLY TO HER*

These words from Hosea 2 adorn the packet cover for the Day of Reflection ("Food for the Hungry: a Time for Reflection and Renewal") that I recently presented at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Norris, Tennessee. I share those contents with you in a slightly revised version since they outline another wonderful at-home-or-away personal retreat for your prayerful meditation – perfect for anytime but this one, especially for the Lenten season now upon us.

My working title for this issue of *TSP Express* is **"When did I start to love You?"** Such a reflection is always good for us and can bring a divine freshness to our souls as we recall the beauty and warmth our Beloved has made known to us in earlier days. Perhaps we even "pine" for those days to return. We can let our hearts quicken with hope when we realize that He is wanting the same ... only more so! He wants us and He wants us close to Him with nothing separating our deep gaze into each other's eyes. Let us return to being "eyelash to eyelash" with Him, fully reconciled and moving onward with Him.



**“FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY – A TIME  
TO REFLECT AND RENEW”**  
*a pre-Lent spiritual preparation*

with Lucy Brown · Saturday, February 10, 2018

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St. Joseph Catholic Church, Norris, Tennessee

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Comes a warning in the liturgy these days soon upon us, **“Today if you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”** Now, therefore, is the time for us to **deepen our spiritual hunger, our thirst, our longing** so we may hear and recognize **the call of our Shepherd to “come close”** for “now is the day of salvation.” (II Corinthians 6:2)

A different subtitle for this Day of Reflection “Food for the Hungry” could well be **“a love story.”** A love story so sublime that it defies description, yet we will try today!

*We ask You, Holy Spirit, to help us fan into flame the fire of our love for You and for the Father and for the Son, our Beloved. We want to yield to Your wooing of us today and ever hereafter. Forgive us in Your mercy. Restore and renew us in Your love we pray.*

# THE CALL

## Who is it that calls us so fervently?

### ... God the Father and His Son

#### Hebrews 1

“Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.” (vs. 1-4)

#### Colossians 1:15-20

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.”

### ... Our redeemer

#### **humble yet powerful**

Isaiah 42:1-9; 43:1-5; 44:1-4

“He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;  
a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.” (42:2-3)

#### **supreme majesty yet intimately warm and tender, personable, familiar**

Psalm 24

Psalm 139

“But of all the things I saw, this was my greatest comfort: that our good Lord, who is so holy and so much to be feared, is at the same instant so homely\* and courteous.\*\* This warmed me full of love and comforted my very soul.”

(*Revelation of Love*, Julian of Norwich, tr. John Skinner, p. 15)

“Flee we to our Lord and we shall be comforted; let us touch him and we will be made clean; cling to him and we will be sure and safe from all manner of peril; for our courteous Lord wills that we be as homely with

him as heart may think or soul desire. But we must take care not to be so familiar that we neglect courtesy. For our Lord himself is sovereign homeliness; yet as homely as he is, so is he courteous, and he is utterly courteous." (pp. 168-9, *ibid.*)

\* *homely*: belonging to the home, domestic; hence familiar, It bears the same insight when used in this context as Christ bidding his disciples call his Father Abba, which they immediately knew as the most familiar address possible.

\*\* *courteous*: gracious (courtly); in combination with 'homely' it is the special quality that Julian experiences in God's dealings with her, and a defining quality of her message of God's love."  
(pp. 185-6 from the Glossary, *ibid.*)

**totally "other," beyond us, yet closer than close to us**

Isaiah 40: 12-31    Acts 17:22-31    I Corinthians 6:17 (12-20)

**... Shepherd of Israel  
and of us**

Psalm 23; 95; Isaiah 40:11

John 10

"... the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers ... I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ... I know my own and my own know me ... My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. " (vs. 3-5, 11, 14, 27)

**... Husband to Israel**

Ezekiel 16:1-14; Isaiah 54; 61-62 ; Jeremiah 31

**and to us**

John 3:29; Matthew 25:1-13; Ephesians 5:22-33

(vs. 31-32) II Corinthians 11:1-3; Revelation 19:5-9; 21:2, 9-27; 22:17

**... The Alpha and the Omega**

Revelation 1:1-20

(listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8D9AgEB6VM>

and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4CRvAPzxiI>

visuals are from "The Apocalypse" movie

<https://www.amazon.com/Apocalypse-RichardHarris/dp/B0001HAHNM>)

## What is He saying?

Isaiah 55; Revelation 1-3

*"Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying"*

### **I have loved you with an everlasting love**

Jeremiah 31:3

### **Come back to Me**

Psalms 95:6-11; Hosea 2:16-25 (4-21); 6:1-6

"Therefore, I will allure her now; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak persuasively to her. ... There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as on the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. ... I will betroth you to me forever: I will betroth you to me with justice and with judgment, with loyalty and with compassion; I will betroth you to me with fidelity, and you shall know the LORD." (vs. 16-17, 21-22)

### **Return to your first love**

Revelation 2:1-7

"... you have lost the love you had at first. Realize how far you have fallen. Repent, and do the works you did at first." (vs. 4-5)

## The love story – "the way of a Man with a maid"

Proverbs 30:18-19

(see footnote on this text at <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+30%3A18-19&version=NABRE> )

Reference above scriptures for "husband."

**"The Dramatic Love of the Desert"** Fr. Ryan Mann

<http://tobinstitute.org/uncategorized/ash-wednesday/>

### **"SHEPHERD BOY"** (listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnCLaujER58> )

lyrics based on poem from St. John of the Cross:

**"A Love For Which He Suffered – a Meditation ... "**

<http://blog.adw.org/2012/07/a-love-for-which-he-suffered-a-meditation-on-the-poem-of-st-john-the-cross-un-pastorcico/>

### **The Shepherd and His flute – a parable of sorts**

"But if, through frailty and misfortune, I relax the watch over my senses and allow them to stray far away from You amongst the things of the world, I beg You, Lord, come to my aid at once! ***"Do not permit my senses to go astray, but do You Yourself deign to call them back to You, like the good shepherd who, with his flute, calls his sheep dispersed in the***

*valley. You, more than any other shepherd, have a call so sweet and so powerful that the senses, as soon as they hear it, cannot resist, and quickly come back into the sanctuary of the soul where You await them and to which You call them. O loving Shepherd of my soul, do not refuse to show me this mercy, so necessary for my weakness”* (cf. Teresa of Jesus, *Interior Castle* [also known as *The Mansions*] IV, 3).  
[www.spiritualdirection.com/2017/12/18/guard-of-the-senses](http://www.spiritualdirection.com/2017/12/18/guard-of-the-senses)

**“HOSEA”** (listen at home)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FB0TWvag\\_Ic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FB0TWvag_Ic)

### **The Reckoning/contrition/response**

Jesus, sought me when a stranger  
Wandering from the fold of God  
He, to rescue me from danger  
Interposed His precious blood  
So to grace, how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be  
And let Thy goodness like a fetter  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee  
**Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it**  
**Prone to leave the God I love**  
**Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it**  
**Seal it for Thy courts above**  
**Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it**  
**Seal it for Thy courts above**

--- from “Come Thou Fount” vs. 4-6

(listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYrTqBioaZ4>

**“YOU ARE MINE”**

(listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgm9IkTNQmc>



# THE PATH/JOURNEY

Psalm 119 Proverbs 4

*the path of the just is like shining light,  
that grows in brilliance till perfect day.* (vs. 18)

**develops through time as I heed God's will and cooperate with grace**

Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21 II Peter 1

**mode to adopt – desire training to hear, speak**

Isaiah 50:4-5

Morning after morning  
he wakens my ear to hear as disciples do;  
The Lord GOD opened my ear;  
I did not refuse,  
did not turn away.

**set up waymarks, signposts, road markers by which to look for the  
old ways of faithfulness when I might go astray**

Jeremiah 31 (v. 21) Isaiah 35:1-10

<https://journeyswiththemessiah.org/photo-Jesus/messiah-v/?portfolioCats=36%2C35>

**realize that “We Have This Moment Today”**

(listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JleFerRQMXI>

(Plan ahead! This beautiful rendition is nine minutes long.)

**cultivate true gratitude and thanksgiving always – to God and to one  
another**

I Thessalonians 5

**find companionship with others of like mind**

Philippians 1:11; 2

**mark “silver footprints” in the heart, even in writing, so they will not be  
lost with time -- both as you go and when looking back, they will  
“stand out” to you**

*(At this point Lucy shares snippets from her journey as appropriate and time permits.  
Group will anonymously write from their own spiritual journeys during break to follow.)*

# **AID FOR THE JOURNEY**

( *introducing The Secret Place* )

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*LUNCH* and thoughtful browsing of themed tables

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**SHARING OF STORIES / Q & A**  
as desired, anonymously or otherwise

## **“MY JESUS I LOVE THEE”**

(listen at home)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3am-1inzErA>  
(very simple version)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDXTqTuG1Nk>  
(more worshipful version)

song background:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My\\_Jesus\\_I\\_Love\\_Thee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Jesus_I_Love_Thee) *and*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kF2mXCjkkv0>

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**St John Eudes  
(1601-1680)**

**He belongs to you  
but more than that,  
He longs  
to be in you,  
living and ruling  
in you,  
as the head lives  
and rules  
in the body.  
He wants  
His breath  
to be in  
your breath,  
His heart in  
your heart  
and His soul in  
your soul.**

*Anastpaul/17*

# Sweet Languishing

Psalm 84

You hunger and thirst for Me as a dying one craves the light of day. You long after Me as the one whose sense of smell remembers the fragrances of heaven yet on earth can find no such essence. You cry out from your depths for Me, beloved, because I continually draw you into My heart.

You are resident here, My love, and no amount of living or loving on earth will thereby satisfy your desire to be with Me. Think it not, therefore, strange to be “lost” so many times, yea, even in one day – “lost in wonder, love and praise,”\* for many others, too, have known what this means.

You are ever locked in love, dearest one. How would you ever desire otherwise? Yet, you have, My fairest one, you have . . . and you shall, My fair one, You shall. Oh, that the ardor of the human heart would be constant like Mine is . . . but, for now, it is a better way, this way. Your love to Me, as given, is always a fresh offering. Since you are always changing, your love changes accordingly. I change not . . . but I am whole, My love, I am whole and lacking in nothing.

You are becoming whole in My completeness. Your love is being perfected . . . as is your faith. I have been the originator of both and I am bringing both to glory in their completion. Your love ebbs and flows by your diligence or lack of it to desire Me. The many factors of “living below” may sap the expressions of your love from time to time. Surely, the amount of hungering and thirsting after Me varies with the days.

I fill the hungry with Myself. I pour Myself into the open . . . so all who want Me can be satisfied. Continue to want Me, My love. Continue to desire Me. Continue to reach for Me . . . especially when others clamor after and around you. I answer the call of your heart for Me even when it is not expedient for you to seek Me in solitude. We love one another in the secret place of your heart in those times. Do not think it strange, therefore, should you “lose track” of a conversation around you . . . or “forget” what you are doing at the moment. We – you and I – are in the chamber, taken up with each other, though actively engaged in any of a myriad of endeavors. This is as it should be, My bride, for as you fan the flame of love throughout your busy times, you will not only be temporarily satisfied, but you will long more intently for the times of solitude and you will more readily enter them with Me.

You know I will be found in the solitary place. Hasten to Me there, beloved. I wait for you with eagerness even as you, longing for My embraces in the solitary place, companion with Me in the heat of the day. You shall be filled, My love. Your hunger shall be satisfied, your thirst slaked . . . moment by moment . . . as you eat, as you drink of Me. Eat and drink your fill. Sufficient to each day am I. I am here . . . drawing you unto and into Myself. Therefore, come . . . yes, hungrily come . . . and we, both shall be full.

\* from the hymn “Love Divine, All Love Excelling” by Charles Wesley and John Zundel