

1429  
1716

Monday Prayers - 970  
2. 7. 84  
7. 7. 88

970

Praise My Soul w/ Taibour [Non Song 2] OMS

Come to the Water  
(Wood Hall 15)

In the late 60s - early 70s, in the chapel as elsewhere, there was an upsurge of great eagerness to change things, to do things differently. One tiny incident I remember was of a nun who thought to have the cruets used for the water and the wine at Mass look more attractive, so she got a new set in cut coloured glass to replace the plain-glass ones in the chapel. Not long afterwards she commented that it was a kind of expensive and roundabout way to learn that there was a practical wisdom in using clear glass, after all - you could immediately see which was the water and which the wine. Well, doing things differently can lead back to a better understanding & appreciation of the ways you wanted to be different from - and another example of that is (I think) the re-found value of silence, in prayer and spirituality and spiritual exercise. For a time, then, silence was out, in retreats & recollection exercises, partly no doubt in revolt against the normal expectation or requirement to be silent in those circumstances. Now, there's a wider flexibility and variety in ways of praying, meditating, making spiritual exercises of different kinds: and silence has its place among them. You might say that in a place like Hong Kong it's more of a necessity, not only for spiritual health & growth but even for mental & psychological, to find some kind of quiet and silence. That's all about external conditions: then it's too, the mystery of silence itself, the silence of the deep depths, of love or anguish, the silence of God, the silence of the deepest communion or of non-communication. It's encounter with this kind of silence that I wanted to propose for your reflection and prayer today - and, for a change, not in my own words but in those of a great and learned man, one of the foremost theologians of our time: Karl Rahner, who died <sup>4 years ago</sup> a few months ago

In Presence  
24  
2:38

just after celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. [I had meant to talk a little about him before now, to pray for him and give thanks to God for the light and life - inspiration he gave to so many people by his writing and speaking.] I went today to start with you some thoughts of his which I found very true and helpful, encouraging and comforting in prayer. First, though, let's now pray in music and formal prayer, beginning with this song,

"Tears of Love"

MUSIC

PRAYERS [Deut 159, 157]

- From Fr Karl Rahner: "A

strange thing happens to the man who really loves, for even before his own death, his life becomes a life with the dead. Could a true lover ever forget his dead? When one has really loved, his forgetting is only apparent: he only seems to get over his grief. The quiet and composure he gradually regains are not a sign that things are as they were before, but a proof that his grief is ultimate and definitive. It shows that a piece of his own heart has really died and is now with the living dead. This is the real reason he can weep no more.... If it is true that those who have departed in your love have not really lost their life, but have had it transformed into eternal, limitless, superabundant life, why then do I perceive no sign? Why are they for me as if they were no more? Is the eternal light into which they have entered (which is your light, my God) so feeble that its rays cannot reach down to me? Must not only their bodies, but also their love depart from me, in order to be with you? My question thus turns away from them to you, my God, for you want yourself to be called the God of the living and not of the dead. But why am I asking this of you? You are as silent to me as my dead. I love you too, as I love my dead, the quiet and distant

ones who have entered into night. And yet not even you give me answer, when my  
 loving heart calls upon you for a sign that you and your love are present to me. So  
 how can I complain about my dead, when their silence is only the echo of yours?  
 O, can it be that your silence is your answer to my complaint about theirs?  
 That must be the way it is, since you are the best answer, even though  
 incomprehensible, to all the questions of my heart. I know why you are silent:  
 your silence is the framework of my faith, the boundless space where my love  
 finds the strength to believe in your love.... Your love has hidden itself in silence,  
 so that my love can reveal itself in faith. You have left me, so that I can discover  
 you. If you were with me, then in my search for you I should always discover  
 only myself. But I must go out of myself, if I am to find you — and find  
 you there, where you can be yourself. That is how my dead imitate your  
 silence: they remain hidden from me because they have entered into your life. Their  
 silence is really their call to me, the assurance of their immortal love for me.  
 O silent God, God of the silent dead, living God of the living, who call to me  
 through silence, O God of those who are silently summoning me to enter into  
 your life, never let me forget my dead, my living. May my love and  
 faithfulness to them be a pledge of my belief in you, the God of eternal life.