



Good afternoon...almost 3pm ; the day half gone; so many emails today, and telephone calls, some problems, some crises, more joys! I saw five blue jays flying more or less together down Fraserburg Road...two big dark moose along the road to Baysville, I got a coffee at Tim Horton's despite the "germies" from a cheery, tiny, elderly woman with a huge smile and shining eyes that just made me feel good.

How's it been for you today?

The world around me seems so strange. Not even Margot is in the Church with me! I miss her! No one's practicing the organ or dancing in little kilts or holding babies in the hallway. But Ross sent me a great blurb of encouragement, and Pam sent me a picture that showed about 20 rolls of toilet paper wrapped individually and gaily in red and green with a caption that said "There...Christmas Shopping Complete". Moments of happiness popping up here and there.

All of this got me to thinking about the Israelites carted off into exile in Babylon. No Temple. No Scrolls. Not many teachers and doctors and leaders as so many had been killed. No house of their own. No crops yet. Much work ahead. When their captors taunted them and said "So, slaves, sing us one of those fine peppy tunes you're known for!" the response was : "How can we sing the songs of Zion in a strange land". **Psalm 134:3,4**

**How can we sing our songs** of praise and joy to our great God and King and Lord in the midst of the mounting confusion and chaos of the pandemic so drastically altering our lives? I suggest three ways:

- Find a song you like. If you have a hymn book look it up. If it's an oldie, great....if it's hot off the contemporary wires, great. All that matters is that YOU like it and IT speaks about love, hope, peace and the goodness we find in the fullness of life in Jesus.
- Find a chair you like. And then just down and sing it. Sing it, as they say, like nobody's listening. Go flat, or sharp or all over the place, just work your lungs and your tongue and your voice to sing that song. If someone smiles or giggles, so much the better. This could be a family challenge – parents and kids, grannies and gramps and grandkids – everybody singing their favourite song one by one. Yes, it can be done!
- Then stand up, and go to your door and see if you have the nerve to open it up and sing out loud. Cross your fingers that nobody's out there, but even if there are some somebodies, just sing it anyway.

And why in the world should we do this? Why sing in dark times? Simply because it is good for the soul, and makes the heart stronger.

If you actually do this, please text me back and let me know what you sang and how it went and how you felt. I've seen people doing it on balconies in Toronto and in Italy, and they all look so

happy! I pray you can be happy too, as you do whatever you feel good doing to bless your neighbours and care for your families and for yourself. And pat the dog, or give the kitty a treat too!

**A Prayer for Today:**

(Note: Would go very well after you've sung How Great Thou Art!"

I glory in your handiwork O God;  
Towering mountains and deep valleys,  
Dense forests and expansive deserts,  
Fathomless depths of blue below, and immeasurable  
Heights of blue above.

When I peer into the universe of the telescope  
Or the universe of the microscope I stand in awe at:  
The complexity and the simplicity  
The order and the chaos,  
And the infinite variety of colours everywhere.

When I watch the little creatures that creep upon the earth  
I marvel at:

Such purpose  
Such direction  
Such design and yet  
Such freedom,  
Such openness,  
Such creativity.

O Lord God, Creator of the hummingbird and the Milky Way,  
I am full of wonder at Your work. And full of praise for You.

- Richard J. Foster, adapted



Finally, how can we help each other? How can I help you? If you need things picked up and delivered, if you need some ears to listen to your concerns, if you need to share a joke or just talk, just call....Best to call my cell phone at 705 205 0549 or leave a message at the office line. They will be checked.

Abundant blessings to you all. Keep strong and be of good courage for the Lord your God is with you.

Judie+