



Deeper Communion through awareness.

In John's gospel, Jesus speaks to the disciples about friendship. Friendship is offered and its fulfilment will be as people live in Jesus way. Jesus is calling us beyond shallow living to a deeper communion.- (John 15: 12-14)

In this study we look at the purgative way, the primary aim of which is the development of real repentance and thus a turning more towards God. It is to take seriously what Jesus meant when he came into Galilee saying "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15)

It is about acknowledging the vitality of God's holiness.

Times past, this kind of language has been used to make people fearful of divine punishment. However the motive of fear of divine punishment is an inferior one. In more generous souls it soon gives way to deeper realisation of the love of God.

That's what leads to real penitence isn't it? The holiness of God within which we are embraced. But real penitence doesn't come all at once. Real penitence comes with self-awareness. Isn't that the case?

To that end the tradition teaches us that the habit of self examination needs to be formed so we develop awareness.

From my observations over the years, I have compiled a list of issues that may be helpful as we seek deeper communion.

The great spiritual writer Pier Caussade reminds us that "God teaches the soul by pains and obstacles as much as by ideas."

We may be aware of this as we think about some of the issues around which repentance and a new beginning are necessary.

1. **Attentiveness:** How well do we attend and listen to people? Jesus, our model in the Gospels is so often amongst crowds and distractions. Yet his attentiveness is absolute to the one whom he is with.

We would all be mindful of those times when we have been running too fast, trying to fit in too many things and have missed what some one is saying to us.