

A rhythm of loss and gain ~ Midweek Reflection # 40, March 17, 2009

“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, ‘This is the way’” ~ Isaiah 30:21

“At this moment, many ordinary men and women just like you and me are being invited to enter into the rhythm of loss and gain. In each of our lives, there no doubt have been periods of fervor when we could almost touch the goodness of God. We have enjoyed various religious exercises, precious securities for many of us, in which it was a joy to be in his presence. Perhaps all this has changed now: like Catherine of Siena we seem to have lost Christ and we fear he might never return.”/

“But the gain is never far away. God’s love and mercy are too great and too lasting to depend on the rise and fall of his frail creatures. Clouds may shroud our soul in darkness, but above them the sun shines brightly; God’s mercy never fails. Those who grasp the real meaning of this truth find Christ in a new way. This experience marks the beginning of a richer life in which joy and peace flourish even in the darkness, because they are rooted not in superficial human feelings, but deep down in the dark certainty of faith that Jesus is always the same.

Happiness and sadness may play havoc with our emotions, but once we learn that God dwells in darkness beneath the shifting surfaces of our souls, we know that that is where we must go to find him. There we will pray in peace and silence, attentive to the God who never changes.”

~ Brennan Manning, Reflections for Ragamuffins, Harper San Francisco, 1998 page 83

Brennan Manning has perfectly captured the essence of my spiritual journey over the past ten months in this previously unpublished reflection from this collection of daily devotions, Edited by Ann McMath Weinheimer and published in 1998. It appears as the meditation for March 23rd, and as I read it the other day I was overwhelmed with gratitude for God’s mysterious way of meeting our needs through his servants who have gone before us on this wonderful journey! His presence is indeed to be found, not in the chaotic surface waves but in the depths of our hearts where he promised to dwell until the end of time, securing a peace that passes understanding as we focus our attention on his loving presence.

“ I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so

our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.” ~ Psalm 123:1-3b

May we all find Christ in a new way, a richer life in which joy and peace flourish even in the darkness, rooted in the certainty that Jesus is always the same.

Under the constant mercy of God,

Howie