

# *In the Barn!*

## *Barneys Newsletter*



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by **John  
Mason**

**T**he other day I remembered an incident with my wife June. This was less than twelve months ago when she was a resident in Hammond-Care Nursing Home. I held her hands and told her, “June I love you and I know you love me” With a smile she looked at me and said “yes”. This was the last direct word with June said to me before the Alzheimer’s disease took its

## Small Incidents Can Help Us to Pray

final toll.

That memory inspired me to thank God for over 40 years we had as a married couple, I then prayed for all the young married couples especially those in the Parish that they would persevere with their marriage. They would think of each other before thinking of themselves and I prayed they all would have a long married life like June and I had.

One other day whilst sitting outside with June I looked down at the pavement and saw all these very small ants going here, there and everywhere. I then prayed for all people who are hurrying, going flat out all the time and perhaps not getting very far. That they would slow down and be more thorough in what they did. I thought

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# From Winter to Spring

by Kathy Hansen

sunshine, gentle breezes, and deep blue skies of Spring. What gets us through Winter is knowing it is temporary, that Spring is coming.

Often when I am in the middle of hard times, I wonder why God is taking so long to grow me. Why hasn't he shown me the way out of my problems?

In the middle of winter, I don't wonder when the sun will shine stronger. I don't look at my barren patch of brown grass and wonder when it will be green and sprouting flowers. I know that underneath the ground and in the sky, conditions are slowly but surely changing to bring new life, and growth from the earth. The cold wet dew on the ground in Winter is part of the process to encourage growth, tenderly, slowly and invisibly. Spring comes, and all that work bursts into bloom, seemingly overnight.

In my Christian life, I feel like there are long, arduous periods of barrenness with no growth. I fumble and poke at my problems. I ponder them. I try to develop a logical way to overcome them. It doesn't work. Something always gets in the way – feelings, responsibilities, doubt, distraction.

In Winter, do we dig holes in the

earth, and prod at the seeds we have planted? Do we lie awake, wondering why a flower has not blossomed; then uproot it and plant it in a different spot each day? No. We plant the seed, water it and trust the natural turn of the seasons will coax it to life. Usually, it does.

Lately I have seen much of my Christian growth happens without me noticing, under the surface. I had drifted away from talking daily with God. A friend suggested I put bible reading and prayer in my daily routine; I took his advice. My compass was pointing in the right direction again. After I reconnected with God, I made a foolish decision. I went through a rough patch at work. Why did these things happen when I was talking to God regularly, and reading my bible? Surely they should happen when I was struggling alone. Now I am talking to God more, can't he give me an answer straight away?

God's timetable for growing me, is not the same as mine. I am impatient. Once I identify a problem, I want an instant solution, so I can leave it behind, and get on with being competent. God takes much longer than that. Me, suddenly paying him more attention in the middle of his growing season for me, cannot hurry the process. There are landmarks I need to reach

and understand, step by step. This happens slowly. I don't see the change in myself. Just like winter changing to Spring, it is gradual; we don't see it happening minute by minute.

Instead of poking at the problem, I am looking to God, and how he wants me to live each day. The solution will emerge. It may not be the answer I want. It may lead me to more growth and hard work.

Patience is part of the lesson. My priority is the problem itself. God wants more for me, he wants me to be patient and trust him, to accept his will for me.

I am thinking more clearly. It seemed to burst out of nowhere, like sunshine and flowers in Spring. The way through is clearer. What seemed important before, is not. Where I saw a problem, God saw an opportunity to grow my heart. No longer do I worry about my own competence. The spotlight of my heart and mind is fixed on God, on how to love him. The answer does not lie in my own competence; the answer is to trust God's plan for me to glorify him. I am leaving myself in God's hands, trusting him, and following where he leads me; up through the cold, dark soil of Winter, until Spring blossoms within my soul, in all God's glory.



of all those people who have to get children off to school before going to work. Have much to do when they come home in the evening. For single parents who have to do so much on their own. For the women and also for the men for Warwick Marsh who supports men in his work Dads4Kids and the Fatherhood foundation.

The next day when I was again sitting outside I looked down at the pavement and saw one single little ant all on its own. This directed my prayers to

all those living alone, feeling lonely and depressed; not knowing where to turn next to pray or all who are spiritually lost. Quite a few prayers from simply seeing some ants.

On another occasion I like up at the sky and saw a small cloud being driven by the wind. It had no choice as to where it could go. This had me praying for people under Dictatorships, for Christians persecuted and imprisoned for their faith. This little cloud was driven by the wind which reminded me of the Holy Spirit guiding and directing our lives.

I first came across this method of praying in a book by Michael Quoist a Roman Catholic Priest in his book, "Prayers of Life". He states "The Father has put us in the world, not to walk through it with lowered eyes, but to search for him through things, events and people." Perhaps it could be called, "praying with your eyes open." So keep praying.

Every Blessing,  
Jason Mason.

## Find-A-Word - Winter

Ant	Friend	Praying	Sun
Christians	Grass	Simply	Supererogation
Dictatorships	Ground	Single	Temporary
Earth	Holy	Spirit	Underneath
Encourage	Imprison	Spring	Winter
Fatherhood	Pavement	Stronger	

I H W E U N D E R N E A T H M  
U T B N U S X N K D J N M R B  
S R Y C I T B O Q S Q G X A K  
P A R O Z R S I G N I Y A R P  
I E A U R O N T G Y V N A V E  
H R R R E N A A C M J F G N E  
S P O A T G I G G R A S S L T  
R A P G N E T O W T Y F D N E  
O V M E I R S R H R L D D O G  
T E E A W A I E S C P N N S N  
A M T O D W R R P S M U E I I  
T E J Q M H H E I U I O I R R  
C N G H O A C P R N S R R P P  
I T H O L Y J U I P K G F M S  
D B D P P L N S T O E I X I G

## PRAYER POINTS



Please send through points for yourself. I will also pick up points from around Barneys to place here if others feel comfortable sharing.

- Pray that as COVID restrictions lift that we will be able to get on-site ministries running safely.
- Give for the Fathers in the church this Father's day. Give thanks for thier role and pray that they will be like their Father in heaven.
- Pray that God will use the on-line services to preach the gospel to those who don't know him.