

A SHOT OF HOPE THE SPEAKING TREE

The Power Of Love Can Transform Lives

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During this Covid-19 pandemic, two kinds of power have come into play in India – the love of power and the power of love. The motivation underlying these two is vastly different – is it all about ourselves, or is it all about others? The first is demonstrated by all those profiteering from this horrendous situation, and the second exemplified by the frontline workers, committed civil servants, those extending humanitarian assistance and bringing solace to the sick and the dying.

What we do all depends on the way we look at life. Saint Teresa of Kolkata was once asked about assisting in the creation of a grandiose hospital that would be named after her. She was asked to think about all the lives that the hospital could help and how all who entered would see her name. Without missing a beat, she replied: “God did not call me to minister to the millions but to minister to the one in front of me.” She believed in living her life one day at a time because we have the power to change the world only one life at a time.

The power and strength of love is recounted in the story about Dashrath Manjhi, a poor labourer in a village near Gaya in Bihar. His wife Falguni Devi died in need of medical help. So, Manjhi singlehandedly forged a road through the mountains, working with a hammer and chisel for 22 years. Built the road that shortened the distance between the hospital and his village from 75 kms to 5 kms.

It is an oft-repeated religious belief that God brings good out of evil. Without denying all the grief, suffering and sorrow that the pandemic has brought humanity, let us ponder on the five suggestions made by Patrick Manning, a professor of Pastoral Theology, to make some meaning of it all.

First, be on the lookout for the unexpected ways that God may be working in this crisis. What unforeseen good might God bring out of this mess? Second, the pandemic could be seen as an invitation from God to rest awhile. Third, refocus on what is really important in this life. Fourth, spend more time with God in prayer. Fifth, connect more deeply with the people in your life. All of these are unexceptionable suggestions.

The power of love can save not only lives but transform them. This is true not only of human beings but also of human beings in relationship with animals. A ‘Bright Side’ story talks about a man who observed an eight-year-old girl in a store. She was talking to a dog, petting it and smiling. Her parents were standing at one side looking happy. This onlooker later learnt that their daughter was autistic and that it was the first time they’d heard her talk using full sentences.

The French Jesuit, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin once said: “Someday after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love and then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.” Let us pray, look forward to and move towards this day.



*For hope in the
time of Covid-
19, send your
questions to
spiritual
masters, scan
the QR Code or
visit
<https://bit.ly/3eGSfyo>*