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Expressing and Sharing Hope in Difficult Times Grace in the Mountains

Emotions are not right or wrong, good or bad. They are merely indicators of what is happening, and must be listened to, usually in the body. **Richard Rohr**

You're invited to dip into your emotions as you navigate this strange time in our lives. Let's engage in soul work as we contemplate our feelings to enable us to move through the barriers of feeling stuck in a time warp.

Often, we can talk our way out of anger, fear, confusion, or sadness. Sometimes, we need to be still, let go and open up a bit deeper.

The following is an opportunity to take a journey inward and express some of these mysterious emotions in a meaningful way. Also, please watch the videos on Grace's website for more information about this project.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Your Space

A quiet setting is usually best for most people. Perhaps play music that inspires you. Plan to spend a while in this space—give yourself the gift of slowing down and looking inward. You may want to complete your project in one sitting or come back to it several times. Work at your own pace without pressure.

Gather your supplies* and some paper for doodling your ideas.

Take a few moments to close your eyes, breathe deeply and relax. Creativity is also about connecting with the divine in your soul.

Are you ready to create?

2. *Your Supplies

You will be provided with a 9x12 sheet(s) of multimedia paper (for wet or dry art) to use for your final draft.

You may work with whatever mediums you have on hand and are comfortable with; oil pastels, colored pencils, watercolor pencils, regular watercolor paints, pen and ink, acrylic paints, markers, etc. You may like to incorporate natural objects into your design. If you are unsure what to use, please call Marie at 828-788-1132 for suggestions.

3. Your Theme

We are focusing on "Expressing and Sharing Hope during Difficult Times". What brings you faith and courage to persevere during this time? What keeps you strong? Where do you find peace? Take your time as you think about words, phrases, poems, or stories that speak to you. Let your mind wander and you'll begin to "see" a pattern taking shape in your mind. Pray for guidance to uncover your special word(s). When you are ready, try sketching/doodling words that are rising to the surface of your mind and heart. Look at the words and fine tune them until you KNOW with an inner knowing what you are trying to express.

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4. Your Creation

As you play with the words that give you hope, what images come to mind? They could be abstract, symbolic or actual scenes/objects. Think about what shapes, colors, and lines could represent your word(s).

Play around with your visuals and experiment. Have fun, let go of preconceived notions; let the visual flow and grow. Trust your instincts. Do you have a sense where God may be leading you?

Please know that this is YOUR unique expression. There will be no comparing or judging.

5. Your Completed Creation

When you have your word(s) and visual(s), it's time to complete your design on the multimedia paper. You may begin with the written word(s) or the visual(s)—whatever you are led to do. Words could be written around, through, above or below your visual. Try out various designs on scrap paper before committing to the final draft!

When you are satisfied with your creative offering, it's time to step away. You may sign and date your project. This will be one way to remember the pain and the hope of this time in history. If you are willing, we may combine these works of art into a display to encourage others to keep the faith, and to capture this time in history.