

Monthly Meditations May June July 2010

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Meditation for May

The busy months of March and April are behind. The preparations are mostly done for spring flowering and winter vegetables. A trailer load of potting mix has disappeared into the garden pots.

Now is the waiting time, watching seedlings grow. This year to save money I have tried growing some of the flowers from seed. I had good success with *Sweet Alice*, *Petunias*, *Cosmos*, and *Sweet Mignonette*. Partial success with *Russel Lupins*. No success with *Jonny Jump Ups* which surprised me as often they pop up by themselves from last year.

The *Baby's Tears* along the side garden has really become established but I have found it difficult to weed. No good just pulling at the green part sticking above the *Baby's Tears*. It requires parting the plant to find the root position and then pull. This reminded me that often we see a behaviour in ourselves or others, especially children and attack the visible behaviour. Instead we need to see what is behind the behaviour, what is the unmet need?

I have enjoyed the bright yellow flowers from the *Mexican Tarragon*, they have made a splash of colour where most other plants are not flowering. I hadn't noticed they had sprawled all over the rose bush *Wife of Bath* that is dedicated to my daughter. In fact the rose bush was being smothered. I reflected how often life is like that. Somebody or some activity is in focus taking all our time and energy. Something good in itself and giving pleasure but there is the hidden cost of suffocating something else... Perhaps our own needs or our relationship with God. There comes a time when the good thing must be pruned back to allow light and air in. New shoots on the rose then begin to appear and the other plant actually benefits as well as it too takes on new growth not hampered by the old. This thought becomes a basis for prayer for others and my self, to be alert for what is smothering my relationship with God.

The *Rosella* bushes in the front garden are bearing prolifically. Picking them is no easy task, scissors are needed and patience. The task is not over then, to make jam or chutney requires removing the petals. The colour and taste of the jam is amazing. Our relationship with God is so worth all the time and patience we give it. Take time today.

Judy

Meditation for June

What an exciting month. The garden is full of promise. The seeds I ordered have sprouted and been transplanted, the *Mignonette* is even setting buds. The few survivors of *Russel Lupin* are doubling in size each week. It is with much satisfaction that I see most of the annuals in the garden I have grown from seed this year, saving money for other things. *Petunias*, *Sweet Alice*, *Cosmos* & *Jonny Jump Ups*. The *Cosmos* wave like a colourful flag in the front garden, to welcome me home.

Many plants are self sown or just multiply. The *Sweet Peas* (*Painted Lady*) came originally from my mother's garden and every year delight me with her memory and her gift to me of a love of gardening. As they grow and winds have come they need string or cages to support their growth. Who are the supports in your life? Take time to name them and thank God for them.

The bulbs of *Jonquils* and *Freesias* I purchased from catalogs have all pushed their way through the ground. Dormant bulbs from last year pop up in surprising places, forgotten while sleeping beneath the ground. See if you can find all 15 clumps of bulbs, some are well hidden.

Pictures in the catalogs set the imagination afire with pictures of how the garden might look.

Also my morning walk in the garden gives me hope of the picture to come as I notice new shoots, buds and growth.

Paul wrote “- the faith & love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you” *Colossians 1: 5*

It sounds like faith and love are flowers sprouting from the seeds of hope. What is this hope? The hope of eternal life with Christ. Not an empty hope. Nor like my garden - the picture in my head may not materialise due to weather, grubs, viruses, weeds, or lack of care. Instead we have the guarantee that Titus speaks of “a faith resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time...” *Titus 1:2*

What are your hopes? Take some time to think about them and write them down. How does the Hope of Eternal Life affect these other hopes of yours?

Are the flowers of faith & love blooming in your life? You might be surprised where you find them. Violets are the symbol of faithfulness. Search among the leaves to find these fragrant blooms. Roses the symbol of love are much easier to see. Enjoy.

Judy

July Meditation.

This month is the best time of the year in the garden here in Brisbane. The weather so lovely, you actually like sitting in the sun. The first *Jonquils* and *Lupins* are blooming. I haven't grown *Lupins* since our childhood, so it was great excitement to see them flowering here in Queensland.

Last year my cousin gave me a few *Nasturtium* plants, this year they have self seeded and grown so prolifically that I have to cut them back every second day as they swallow up *Roses* and other flowers. The chooks get a nutritious feed! Why don't I just pull them out? I think it's because I had a powerful lesson from them one day. I was riding past on my way to the train when out of the corner of my eye I saw a flash of yellow and gold. I stopped and went back and saw a blaze of *Nasturtiums* covering a huge heap of rubbish. It was like God was saying “ Just come as you are and I will transform you. Don't wait until you think you are good enough”. God can make something beautiful out of a pile of rubbish, He can make something beautiful out of my life. It makes my heart sing with thankfulness and praise.

Preparing for the next 2 retreat days is taking up a lot of my thoughts. I want to involve the garden and have the two themes of “***The Fragrance of God*** – exploring some of the attributes of God through the symbolism of Herbs” or “***The Fragrance of the Life in Christ*** using the symbolism of Herbs”. Each one uses different herbs in the symbolism except the starting point – *Dianthus* or *Clove Pinks* which symbolise Divinity. In ancient Greece and Rome crowns were made of them for their gods or those they wished to honour. Hence our modern day *Carnation* meaning crown. I have had to mail order *Clove Pinks* as these old fashioned original plants aren't readily available. The annual *Dianthus* is in every nursery but it lacks the perfume yet resembles the *Clove Pink* flowers in appearance. The leaves are larger and greener, instead of grey/ blue green. I see them as imposters, sure they look great and survive really well and come in so many colours and shades. They are just as beguiling as the things in our lives that would seek to take first place and replace God.

Wander around the garden and notice the variety of *Dianthus* and take time to reflect on what are the things that wriggle their way into taking our time and attention away from God. Then smell the *Clove Pinks*, their perfume is indeed heavenly. Let the fragrant beauty of God fill your heart and soul and be a tangible memory when you leave.

Blessings, Judy