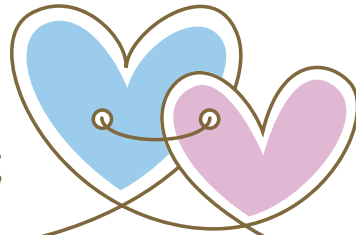


IN THE LORD  
I TAKE REFUGE;



*how can you say to my soul,*  
**FLEE LIKE A BIRD  
TO YOUR MOUNTAIN?**

PSALMS 11:1

## Monthly Reflection:

February 2021

In the LORD I take refuge; how can you say to my soul, “Flee like a bird to your mountain...”? (Ps 11)

We are called to be a joyful people, filled with enthusiasm, passion, and vigor. Often from the first weeks and months of our Jesus Youth journey, we are ushered into creative activity, missions, ministries, and even leadership. Rightly so. For, springs of inner vitality surge naturally from a person who just encountered Jesus and who is now eager to live for him. Still, these springs do not flow on just as naturally. Gradual disenchantment through quarrels and failures leads to a quiet cynicism or a self-deceiving and unrealistic optimism. Here, the voices tell us to flee like a bird, to find safety in stepping back. After all, the world being as it is, the Church being as it is, my community being as it is, what can really be done? “Foundations once destroyed, what can the just do?” (Ps 11)

The despairing soul thinks, “I did what I could. I tried.” It looks out at all the injustice, all the political games being played, all the fakeness of others, and so comforts itself by distancing itself. It hides away in a protective cell of criticism. The false optimist, on the other hand, flees into the world of dreams and great visions. In this world, one does not need to confront the hard facts of actual life or the struggle of faithful and daily commitment.

Perhaps of all the schemes of the evil one (Eph 6:11), discouragement of these kinds is the most deadly for believers, a silent killer. It allows one to maintain one’s faith pristinely, even to profess it boldly. All the while, the person unconsciously resigns to the sidelines of life, no longer daring to make a difference in the world or in one’s local community.

Today, I ask myself: What is my involvement in my local communities? Am I engaged in the ministries around me, in the initiatives, in Christian fellowship? Am I connected with my neighbors or local forms of government or social cooperation? If not, why not?

“Foundations once destroyed, what can the just do?” Simply put, the just can act. The just must act! When something disturbs my conscience, when the present state of affairs stirs up indignation in my soul, such is not the time to flee but to act with greater love and courage. To hide behind endless commentary or intangible dreams does not resolve the inner movement of my conscience; it only represses it and yields a numbing despair, an inner paralysis. The beautiful excitement, joy, and enthusiasm of Jesus Youth can only surpass naivete and discouragement as it is inflamed daily by the intensity and breadth of the Holy Spirit’s fire. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, let us recommit ourselves to courageous engagement.