

The Empty Chair

A priest went to visit a patient in his home. He noticed an empty chair at the patient's bedside and asked what it was doing there. The patient said, "I had placed Jesus on that chair and was talking to him before you arrived. For years I found it extremely difficult to pray until a friend explained to me that prayer was a matter of talking to Jesus. He told me to place an empty chair nearby, to imagine Jesus sitting on that chair and to speak with him and listen to what he has to say to me in reply. I've had no difficulty praying ever since".

Some days later as the story goes, the daughter of the patient came to the rectory to inform the priest that her father had died. She said, "I left him alone for a couple of hours. He seemed so peaceful. When I got back to the room I found him dead. I noticed a strange thing though: his head was resting not on the bed but on a chair that was beside the bed".

From: A way to God. Anthony de Mello SJ

The Prophetic Community

I believe that the way ahead, the only way,
lies through our making ourselves what we ought to be.

When our sons and daughters,
our grandsons and granddaughters
can look at the Catholic Church and say:

'There is the community
of reasonable and sensible people
who actually believe in this person called Jesus Christ
and his resurrection.

That is the community which is not obsessed with itself,
but puts itself at the service of humanity.

That is the community in which people pull together.

That is the community which has fire in its belly about justice:
doesn't mind rattling the bars of people's cages.

That is the community which clearly possesses a treasure
a hidden treasure which makes its members happy'.

When our children and grandchildren can look at us
and say that about us

they will also want to say:

'And that is the community
I wish to belong to'.

Monsignor Tony Philpot

