

Do not be afraid....I have called you
by your name, you are Mine.
Isaiah 43:1

.....All life holds within itself
a promise of resurrection.
Gabriel Marcel

I feel like a pencil in God's hand....
God writes through us-and however imperfect instruments we may be-
he writes beautifully.

-Mother Teresa

Do you know what it means to be struck by grace?
... We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow
them to be transformed by that stroke of grace. It hap-
pens; or it does not happen. And certainly it does *not*
happen if we try to force it upon ourselves, just as it shall
not happen so long as we think, in our self-complacency,
that we have no need of it. Grace strikes us when we are
in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when we walk
through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life.
It strikes us when we feel that our separation is deeper
than usual, because we have violated another life, a life
which we loved, or from which we were estranged. It
strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indif-
ference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of di-
rection and composure have become intolerable to us. It
strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfec-
tion of life does not appear, when the old compulsions
reign within us as they have for decades, when despair
destroys all joy and courage.

Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into
our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying:
"You are accepted. *You are accepted*, accepted by that

which is greater than you, and the name of which you
do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you
will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps
later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not
perform anything; do not intend anything. *Simply accept
the fact that you are accepted!*" If that happens to us, we
experience grace. After such an experience we may not
be better than before, and we may not believe more than
before. But everything is transformed. In that moment,
grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of
estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experi-
ence, no religious or moral or intellectual presupposition,
nothing but *acceptance*. . . .

It is such moments that make us love our life, that
make us accept ourselves, not in our goodness and self-
complacency, but in our certainty of the eternal meaning
of our life. We cannot force ourselves to accept ourselves.
We cannot compel anyone to accept himself. But some-
times it happens that we receive the power to say "yes"
to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us
whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and
that our self is reunited with itself. Then we can say that
grace has come upon us.

PAUL TILLICH,
The Shaking of the Foundations

Francis Of Assisi Kissed The Leper

Francis of Assisi was terrified of
leprosy. And one day, full in the narrow
path that he was traveling, he saw, horrib-
ly white in the sunshine, a leper! Ins-
tinctively his heart shrank back, recoil-
ing shudderingly from the contamination
of that loathsome disease. But then he
rallied; and ashamed of himself, ran and
cast his arms about the sufferer's neck and
kissed him and passed on. A moment later
he looked back, and there was no one

there, only the empty road in the hot sun-
light. All his days thereafter he was sure
it was no leper, but Christ Himself whom
he had met.

-G. K. Chesterton

I counted dollars while God counted
crosses.
I counted gains while He counted
losses!
I counted my worth by the things
gained in store.
But He sized me up by the scars that I
bore.
I coveted honors and sought for
degrees;
He wept as He counted the hours on
my knees.
And I never knew 'til one day at a
grave,
How vain are these things that we
spend life to save!

knew how to look at life through
eyes, we would see it as innumera-
ble tokens of the Creator seeking the
of his creatures.

The Father has put us into the world,
not to walk through it with lowered
eyes, but to search for him through
things, events, people.....Michel Quoist