

GROWING Together

14th Series

...WALKING IN THE LIGHT OF GOD...

Walking — in the Bible

In the Garden of Eden, God walked with Adam and Eve. The children of Israel walked with God for forty years in the wilderness. During the time of the kings, the people of God sang joyfully as they walked three times each year up to the Temple. Jesus walked the dusty way to Jerusalem. In the Book of Revelation, heaven is the beautiful City where God's people walk with the Lord.

Walking today

Today, we often hear about walking. It is an excellent way to keep fit. Many people “power walk” using weights around their wrists and ankles to increase muscle tone and walkmans to distract their mind. After a stressful day, a vigorous walk sets things in perspective. Recreational walking is so popular that many people are now building the TransCanada Trail. Toddlers are fascinated by all they discover on even the shortest walk. Whenever we see a river, ideas of a stroll with friends come naturally.

Walking as a spiritual gift

Walking has always been a unique way for Christians to commune with God. When prayer comes easily, walking can enrich it. When prayer is difficult or impossible, walking may enable us to find God again. Spiritual walking is focused, quiet walking. It literally slows us down, allowing us to gently tune into God as we move deliberately, quietly.

Doing a spiritual walk

Dress in clothes that do not rustle. Choose a place where you can walk confidently, undistracted by traffic or people. Your backyard may be the perfect place. Breathe slowly. Let go of tensions and inner distractions as much as you can. Begin walking—slowly. Notice the beauty of the place. Gradually bring focus to your body. Notice its movements: your feet touching the ground, your toes stretching, your arms brushing at your side, your hair blowing in the wind. Walk as slowly as you can.



As you walk, let prayer rise within you spontaneously. All your fears and worries, joys and hopes—let them bubble up within you. Give them all to God. Keep giving them to God until inner silence comes. In that silence, continue walking—slowly. Gradually open your senses to the larger Presence around you. Feel your *self* with God.

To some degree, spiritual walking depends on health and weather. Try a period of slow walking (30 minutes?); then, sit quietly, imaging God's love around you; walk again for another period. Through simple movement, spiritual walking establishes connection and communion — truly a holy act.

Spirit and body

The human body has always been an essential part of Christianity: Jesus was incarnate, having flesh and blood like ours. It is right that we hallow our body as an integral part of our personal journey with God. Our body is, after all, a part of God's creation, and thus cherished by God, even when we grumble about it. And, there is something even more important involved here: God's Spirit makes of our body a temple. Slow walking is one way to enter that sacred space.



GROWING TOGETHER is a series of five monthly Sunday bulletin inserts for the ecumenical education of Christ's faithful.



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