

“The Catcher” A Meditation

In 1981 I was befriended by an elderly couple, named the Bingham, who had served for thirty years as missionaries in China. One day, which would prove to be a very inspirational moment in my life, they invited me to attend a lecture by Henri Nouwen, who is thought of as one of the most influential spiritual masters of the 20th century. (The author of forty books, he passed away in 1996.) After the lecture I had the blessing of meeting him briefly. The memory of that day still remains fresh in my heart and mind.

I recently found out in a documentary, that Fr. Nouwen was a big fan of the circus and had befriended a family of trapeze artists. He came to see a spiritual parallel between their act and our experience of the grace of God. He realized that the true hero in trapeze is not the one who soars through the air, but, instead, the one who does the catching. In faith we come to see God as the catcher, and that our challenge as human beings is to place our trust in the catcher!

In whatever challenges, perils, heartaches we face in life, whatever losses and experiences of despair that may befall us, we are called to place our trust in the One who dwells within - the one who ‘catches’ us in our times of brokenness. When we do so we can find healing that can move us from a place of deep darkness into a bright sacred light.

Through that experience of divine grace, we can become a blessing to others, becoming what Fr. Nouwen called ‘wounded healers. Our places of brokenness can become a catalyst for the healing of others.