

Twinning Spirituality
Advanced Twinning Workshop
February 11 2006

When you think of a spiritual person, what qualities do they possess that make them “spiritual”?

- Reverent
- Direct relationship with the Divine
- Joyful as if there is something deeper there
- Vertical relationship with God
- Horizontal relationship with God-in-others
- Understanding, openness, emptiness

A Twinning Spirituality involves many of these elements. There is a need to be humble, but not to humiliate. There is a need to detach from guilt about material possessions and opportunities to free ourselves to be open and understanding. There is a desire to recognize and actually listen to God-in-others. It is necessary to cross over through detachment and humility.

There are several dimensions to a Twinning Spirituality

- It is humble
- It is detached
- It is creative
- It involves continuous reconciliation
- It is communal
- It is contemplative
- It involves study

It is Humble:

It is humbling to realize that we have it backwards. Those of us in the ‘developed’ world who put our trust in material things and financial comfort have a lot to learn from those of us in the ‘developing’ world who put all their trust in God.

It is Detached:

Our participation in the Twinning process is a gift of ourselves. In giving ourselves over to experiencing another culture, we set aside/detach ourselves from our assumptions and expectations. We open ourselves to receive a new way of seeing, thinking, understanding. In accepting the gift of our Twinning partners, we allow our world view to be changed.

It is Creative:

Both partners are creating something together that is unique to the parties involved but that is shared by a wider circle within the partner parishes/organizations. And just as a piece of art work, once this creative work goes on display, it becomes something else over which we, the

creators, have no control. How it is interpreted and transformed by others is under the receiver's control.

It involves continuous Reconciliation:

Both parties will do and say things that will offend in the unknown culture. These occasions must be worked through. There are things that will trouble individuals on both sides of the partnership. Authentic dialogue will be required to reconcile these things.

It is Communal:

What God has given us, which is everything, does not BELONG to us. It is given to share. We share with our partners as well as those in our own communities who are not yet exposed to the gifts our twinning partners have to offer.

It is Contemplative:

Individuals involved must pay attention to what is stirring inside them. We must sit with it in prayer. We must notice and focus and then take it to the community. This may lead to transformation.

It involves Study:

Educating all involved about the people and cultures involved in the partnership is crucial. Attention must be given to the dynamic of oneness – we are ALL created in God's image. "Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you. They are unique manifestations of the human spirit"
– Wade Davis