

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

Inhaler

The 16th August 1987, was a day of discoveries for me. It was the day before my birthday and as I waited to discover any potential surprises my family might have had in store for me the next day, I discovered that it was the 10th anniversary of Elvis's death, and so discovered him for the first time. That discovery partially helped me with my second rather unwelcome discovery, that I had asthma. Struggling to breathe for the first time in my life, was a disturbing and worrying experience. However, I then discovered a third thing, something called an inhaler, which could help me breathe! It was extraordinary! 36 years on, although I seldom use the inhaler now, I still feel reassured by having it near me.

Prayer is the spiritual equivalent of breathing. Jesus defined God as a person and our response to Him as being in a loving relationship. Any loving relationship needs good, constant and clear communication for it to flourish. Prayer, is communication between us and God. Yet, I find that I struggle with prayer a lot. Part of the reason is my complicated relationship with my own father. I translate that as God being distant and my prayers not being good enough, which is nonsense, but my heart knows it but my head does not, or my head knows it but my heart does not. And so I often find myself exhausted, wrestling with God, trying to get Him to accept my prayers. Everyone who tries to pray, will have their own struggles and its different for everyone.

However, we do have a 'spiritual inhaler', who is the Holy Spirit. She helps us in our difficulty. She reminds us that we are children of God, and that God loves us so much. That through Jesus, we can approach God, boldly. That, every time we pray, our Heavenly Father, is so pleased to hear it, just as we are so pleased to hear from the ones we long to hear from. The Holy Spirit assures us, that no prayer is ever wasted. If God does not grant us our requests, He will still use our prayers, to give us something else, to do something else good with them. And that sometimes, we don't need to pray, we just need to be with God, knowing that He knows. The Holy Spirit reminds us to keep the relationship with God live and upto date.

May we be encouraged and inspired by the Holy Spirit, who amidst life's chaos and noise, whispers to us constantly, reassuring us, inspiring us, grounding us, connecting us.