“TEACH US TO CARE, AND NOT TO CARE”

“But because of this failure to take with full seriousness the nature and presence of sin, a great deal of caring is simply collaboration in selfishness, in self-pity, in self-destruction, in self-indulgence – all the seemingly endless hyphenations that the self is able to engineer. We wake up one morning and realize we have poured ourselves out for these needy people and they are not getting any better. And we know something is wrong with our caring...” [p.159] Have you had an experience where you knew there was something wrong with your caring, that it became collaboration in selfishness, in self-pity, in self-destruction, in self-indulgence? How did you handle it? What impact has it had on how you care now?

“Teaching people to pray is teaching them to treat all the occasions of their lives as altars on which they receive [God’s] gifts. Teaching people to pray is teaching them that God is the one with whom they have to deal, not just ultimately, and not just generally, but now and in detail.” [p.160] Who has taught you to pray in this way? What ‘wounds’ have become a ‘listening post’ and provided you access to God and others?

“All authentic anything has its beginning in a sense of wonder. And caring must begin with a sense of adoration and wonder. If we do not begin in adoration, we begin too small. If we begin by formulating a problem, by identifying a need, by tackling a necessary job, by launching a program, we reduce the reality that is before us to what we can do or get others to do.” [p.166] Can you think of a time where you either received care or gave care that flowed out of adoration and wonder? How was it different than care that simply focused on the occasion of need?