

## “Never Forget Who You Are”

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"Never forget who you are." These words have come back to me over and over again in recent days. Not long before she passed away, I asked Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration Jean Moore for advice. She shared with me this wisdom that changed the course of her own path, offered to her by a fellow FSPA.

In this time of global crisis, may we all take to heart these words of wisdom.

"Never forget who you are."

We are sisters, affiliates and people of faith. We strive to live out a values-based life, we believe in something beyond our mental grasp, and we understand the importance of community, ministry and prayer. This is our vocation.

These are our values and way of life that define who we are:

1. Reflection - We commit to prayer and contemplation. We pay attention to the counter-cultural aspects of the spiritual life. We know we are made of goodness and love, the very core of our being.
  - ✚ May we pray for all those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us trust in the power of prayer.
2. Presence - We are present to each other, including the Earth, as we understand the interconnectedness of all life. When we practice mindfulness and listening with one another, we offer the holy gift of presence.
  - ✚ As we connect with nature, perhaps limited now to our backyards or gazing out the window, let us be mindful to the goodness in all of creation. Listen attentively to the fears you hold within and witness with others.
3. Simplicity - We recognize that true poverty calls attention to our needs versus wants, alongside gratitude and reliance on God. We evaluate our impact on others, counteracting dishonesty and hidden agendas for our own self-interest and personal gain. We witness and honor the sacredness and sanctity of life.
  - ✚ Resist the temptation to hoard goods. May we focus our attention on what we are able to share instead.
4. Humility - We accept our strengths and limitations and open ourselves to vulnerability. In doing so we understand there is no such thing as a better or best religion, country, gender, race, orientation, status and so on. We recognize privilege in our society, offer hospitality to others, and let go of our desire to be comfortable.
  - ✚ In an attitude of humility, there is no 'other.' This crisis is affecting all of us in our normal routines and comforts. Take this time to discern your commitment to social justice.

5. Peacemaking - We center ourselves on a ministry of peace. We carry this charism throughout the world when we offer our forgiveness and open ourselves to conversion, transforming our relationships and communities.

✚ Suffering can lead to transformation. What difficult thoughts and feelings have you experienced in this crisis? Reflect on what you're being invited to in your spiritual journey.

6. Stewardship - We understand our responsibility to care for the Earth's resources and the needs of the poor and marginalized. We value eco-justice together realizing that there is little environmental health without socioeconomic justice, and vice versa. We honor the wisdom of science and address the reality of our climate crisis committing to sustainability and green efforts.

✚ Reduce, reuse and recycle. Download the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals app and/or review their website at [un.org](http://un.org) to deepen your commitment to sustainability and green efforts.

7. Service - We offer our gifts and talents for the benefit of the common good. As FSPA's mission declares, "We are a community of vowed Franciscan women centered in Eucharist, committed to be loving presence through prayer, witness and service." As affiliates of FSPA, "We are spiritual collaborators joined in sacred relationships, supporting one another to live the Gospel and transform our world."

✚ What gifts and talents can you offer to support relief in this crisis and reach out to our sisters and brothers in need? What is your mission at this time?

With COVID-19 in our midst, times are scary and older generations are especially at risk. Let us trust that all efforts made toward living out our values significantly impact our relationships, community and the Earth. This is our grounding. This is our identity.

"Never forget who you are."

Peace be with you,

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