

Keep A True Lent 2011

The Butterfly

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther. So the man decided to help the butterfly.

He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, but it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened!

In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the

body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly.

~ Author unknown

The caterpillar must work its way out of its cocoon to find the freedom of sunlight and flight as a butterfly. Just so must we work our way out of seeing the challenges we face as situations of limitation. Instead we must become aware of the lessons and the blessings they reveal. In this awareness we take flight as the spiritual beings we truly are.

This Lenten Season 2011, as we prepare for a glorious resurrection experience, is a great time to apply this knowledge of the butterfly to our particular situation. Using the Lenten traditions of fasting and prayer, our work begins with fasting from all negative perceptions and inner talk about the challenges that show up in our lives. Replace them with prayer affirmations that declare their healing, resolution and demonstration as greater good in our lives.

Reflect on these words from the *Prayer of St. Francis* everyday this week:

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness light; And where there is sadness, joy.”