

Martin De Porres House of Hospitality

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*you can't be anyone but you
therefore you are that Other one you love*
IKKYU - 15th century Zen master

Summer 1999

Dear Friends,

There are so many kinds of hugs at Martin's. There are the hugs that come after someone gets out of prison. There are the hugs of a volunteer that has been sick for a while and returns. There are the hugs of the day to day work, when you fall into someone's arms bone tired. There are the hugs when there are no words for the grief each person is experiencing. There are the hugs after a great laugh. The hugs when someone tells you how "really crazy" you are. There are the hugs of reunion and those of departure. The hugs that say the million words that can never be expressed in words. The hugs that come as tears are rolling down your face from the sadness you have just heard. The hugs that come with the thank yous and the bless yous. The hugs you get when you realize that is the exact reason you "dropped" in on Martin's that day. There are the timid hugs of someone mentally or physically ill. There are the hugs of failure, when you weep from the hopelessness of situations. There are the hugs of prayer. There are the hugs after anger. The hug that says you are safe, for this moment at least.

There are the hugs that hurt with longing, the hugs that let you take the next step of faith, the hugs that say I recognize you, you are not a stranger any longer. The hugs of old friends, and the day you ask someone; "may I hug you?", for the first time. There are the hugs that never happen, (a nod or a glance perhaps, but you know deep down that it really was a hug). The hugs that put a spring in your step and open your eyes a little wider. The hugs of knowing the same knowing, and the hugs that say gently "just a little longer". The hugs that make you a believer and the hugs that hurt. The hugs that come after everyone's feelings have been hurt. The hugs that say thank God for this hug.

We miss the hugs of those who have died. David's gentle hug, Wayne's smiling-singing hug, Sylvia's exuberant hugs, Mary's hugs that felt like a caress, Uncle Bernie's quick hugs, Buzzy's puppy dog hugs, Michael's hugs that would crush you, Frank's hugs around the neck, Charles's embracing hugs, Audrey's hesitant hugs, Bucky's shy hugs, Buddy and Walter's hug circle, Wally's welcome home hugs.

In the physical contact of our hugs is the comfort. The same is true with God and Faith. Our faith of God in ourselves and others allows us to embrace. In our embrace the circle is completed. We have come home to each other and God. When we embrace the other, each day dawns with the fervor of a lovers' reunion. We take the risk of creating a miracle. We surrender in the hug our separateness, and become one. When we become one, the seeds of love blossom and grow. May our embrace of each other bring love to the world.

In God's Light,



Barbara Collier
for the Martin De Porres Community