

Daily Meditations 9-9-2021

Arrogance, a Second Sin against the First Chakra

Good morning.

We've been meditating on the capital sin of acedia which includes apathy and listlessness and not caring and even selfishness. Now let's look at some medicine to heal our apathy or our acedia.

In my book *Sins of the Spirit, Blessings of the Flesh*, I actually begin with three chapters on the wonders of our existence; the first chapters on the wonders of the universe, the second is on the wonders of the earth, and the third is on the wonders of the human body. Wonder and awe, the *Via Positiva*, is the medicine for apathy.

Aquinas says, "the zeal comes from an experience of the beauty of things," so we have to get more attuned to the beauty of things and we have to recognize it in the west. In the modern era, the word beauty was thrown out as a category for philosophy and for theology for hundreds of years.

Descartes was still a father of western academia, has a whole philosophy without a philosophy of aesthetics, which might just have a little bit to do with the ecological crisis today. Beauty is not recognized as a moral value.

What I did in these three chapters was to create a litany. A litany is a list of the wonders that we have picked up now through science and other media and before science as well, about the wonders of the universe, the earth, and our own bodies.

Let's just focus today on the wonders of the earth and here are just a few facts that deserve telling and celebrating:

The Gila monster stores fat in his tail and can live for more than two years without eating a thing

The arctic tern migrates from the Arctic to the Antarctic and back every year covering a distance of 16,000 miles. 16,000 miles how's that for an annual trip, through the year no less?

The cheetah can run at speeds of 62 miles per hour for short distances, and the fastest living creature is the peregrine falcon which dives through the air seeking its prey at speeds up to 112 miles an hour.

One female ocean sunfish carried 300 million eggs.

Our topsoil is 50% air and the soil actually inhales oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide down for several feet of depth. The soil down to five inches in depth is completely renewed every hour by this process. Five inches of soil are renewed every hour by the breathing - literally the breathing - inhaling oxygen, exhaling carbon dioxide by the topsoil itself.

Trees each year create 99% of their living parts from scratch. Let me say that again, trees each year create 99 of their living parts from scratch. Water going up tree trunks travels at 150 feet per hour. In summer, an average sized tree will give off a ton of water every day. A ton of water every day; you can see why trees are air conditioners and especially in the time of the warming of the climate.

There are prairie grasses in the Midwest whose roots are ten thousand miles long - ten thousand miles long! The willow tree will transpire five thousand gallons of water per day. Bamboo can grow 3 feet in 24 hours!

The winter rye plant has been measured to grow 378 miles of roots, three miles per day; three miles per day of roots and has 14 million different roots.

The roots of a larch tree were recorded to split a 1.5-ton boulder and raised it one foot in the air.

And a Hasidic master once said "When you walk across the fields with your mind pure and holy, then from all the stones and all growing things and all animals, the sparks of their soul come out and cling to you then they are purified and become a holy fire in you."

This is the beginning of our medicine for apathy for acedia in our time.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow!