

Daily Meditation 04/22/22

Earth Day, 2022: Wisdom from Thomas Berry

Good morning. Happy Earth Day, and a blessed Earth Day to us all.

In today's meditation we are heeding the teachings of Thomas Berry, one of the great eco-mystics and eco-prophets of our time, and we're drawing especially from his foreword to a book on Thomas Merton's writings on nature.

And Thomas Merton was quite explicit about the Cosmic Christ, which is this archetype of the *doxa* or the glory of divinity that is found in all beings. It parallels the Buddhist teaching of the Buddha nature, and the Jewish teaching of the *Shalem*, or the image of God found in all beings. So let's take a look at what Thomas Merton says about the Cosmic Christ. He says:

If we believe in the incarnation of the Son of God, there is no one on earth --

...no one on earth...

...in whom we are not prepared to see, in mystery, the presence of Christ. And again, we ourselves are the second Adam, because we ourselves are Christ. Each of us is an epiphany of the Divine.

He says:

The mere fact of my man-ness should be an everlasting joy and delight: God did not become an angel, God became man, human beings.

He says,

We do not see the Blinding One in black emptiness. He speaks to us gently in 10,000 things; he shines not on them, but from within them.

...from within them. That is the Cosmic Christ. That is the radiance and the luminosity found within things that shines out and blesses us. And he offers this poem called "Oh, Sweet, Irrational Worship."

*Oh, sweet, irrational worship.
Wind and a Bobwhite in the afternoon sun.
By ceasing to question the sun,
I have become light,
Bird, and wind, my leaves sing.
I am earth, earth,
All these lighted things
grow from my heart....*

*Out of my nameless weeds,
His foolish worship.*

...out of my nameless weeds, his foolish worship.

One commentator said about this song, "The Earth Song conveys Merton's consciousness of the ground of being."

...the ground of being. And that is of course Eckhart's influence on Merton also:

Eckhart says, "Our ground and God's ground are the same."

...all of us are the same. And Merton says,

*Life is this simple. We live in a world that is absolutely transparent. The Divine is shining through it all the time.
This is not just a nice story or a fable. It is true.*

So to open ourselves up to the Divine, to that light, to the Cosmic Christ shining through all of nature, all the time.

And he had a mystical breakthrough at rush hour in downtown Louisville, where he says,

*Thank God, thank God, I am only another member of the human race like all the rest of them. I have the immense
joy of being a man. There is no way of telling people that they're all walking around, shining like the sun.*

That was the essence of his mystical experience in downtown rush hour in Louisville. He found everyone was walking around shining like the sun. The pure glory of God dwells in them.

Now, Meister Eckhart, on whom Merton depends very strongly -- and he tells us that. He says, Eckhart was his lifeboat in the last years of his life.

Eckhart says that we're not just here to be other Christs, but to act like other Christs, doing Christ's works, and

*...behaving exactly like Jesus. Christ says, 'Here, follow me.' 'Follow' is a command to act, mold yourself in all
your works on Christ's pattern.*

And so those are some of the teachings of the Cosmic Christ found in nature, found in us -- we are nature after all -- and in the teachings of our finest mystics.

Blessed Earth Day. We'll see you tomorrow.