

## Daily Meditation 05-11-22

### Institutionalized Violence & the Unsupreme Court

Good morning. Today we are meditating on the unsavory but necessary topic of institutional violence... institutional violence.

How much institutional violence is there today pouring out of the Supreme Court: violence toward women. violence toward girls. The way is being paved for denying all women and girls to make decisions about their own bodies.

How violent is that? Something very parallel is going on in Afghanistan with the Taliban, locking women up again, behind their burkhas and forbidding education, work and the rest.

Now the fact that Susan Sontag defines fascism as institutional violence is very important. It links this credibility that institutions give violence to those who want to use violence, especially against women. Three judges appointed by a twice-impeached president who lost his first presidential election by 1.9 million votes but not the Electoral College to become president, and then lost his second election by 7 million votes, but has been going on ever since saying that he didn't lose it; it was lost, stolen.

All this has to do with violence, because to refuse to admit when one has lost and not play by the rules - that's violence; let's destroy the rulebook.

Father Fascism says, "Move over women, Father knows best; Father Fascism knows best." Punitive Father God.

There's talk now about putting pregnant women in prison. Not just talk but there are laws being passed and states putting pregnant women in prison and their doctors and friends and Uber drivers. These laws have been passed in certain states in America today.

Now institutional violence is part of Father Escriva's organization called Opus Dei. And here is a report from a woman who worked, in Opus Dei, close to Father Escriva, who was his secretary for seven years. She says she was forbidden to step out of the building. When a friend came to visit her from Venezuela, she was lied to on the phone and told that Tapia - that was her name - was not the building. She lost 20 pounds; her hair had turned completely white from the ordeal. She was completely deprived of any outside contact with anyone.

She says, "I was a prisoner. Eventually they broke me. Years later, I realized that Opus Dei had brainwashed me." And among the agents were two women and Monsignor Escriva himself.

Escriva went into a fit of rage in a harrowing meeting. He shouted to people, priests who were present. "Take that one (referring to a woman named Gladys), lift up her skirt, take down her panties and whack her on the behind until she talks - make her talk," he screamed, and he turned to Tapia who was present and said, "You are a wicked woman, sleazy, scum! That's what you are! Now go, I don't want to see you!" And so-called advisors were stationed both inside her room and outside her room. They followed her even to the bathroom.

"I began to shake almost constantly as a result of my terror. I was afraid they will take me to a mental institution. And I knew they had done that to other members of the work (Opus Dei)."

In her final meeting with Escriva, he said, "You are a wicked woman! A lost woman! Mary Magdalene was a sinner, but you -- you are a seductress with all your immorality and indecency! You are a seductress! I know everything! You're wicked, wicked, indecent! Come on! Hear me well! Whore! Sow!"

This is a man who got himself canonized after he died, and he worked very hard at it while he was alive. And there's no doubt Opus Dei paid lots and lots of money to just the right people in the Curia to get him canonized.

This is the kind of violence that is institutionalized where fascism reigns. And it's a lot like the goings-on, I think, in Alito's mind these days. And all those who want to lock women up, who want to control them, and tell them that they know what they should do with their bodies. And they know they should always bring a pregnancy to birth, even if it comes from incest or from rape. It's enough to make you a little bit scared and very angry, morally outraged.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.