

Daily Meditation 4/14/2023

Evil & Grace, Crucifixion & Resurrection out of Nashville

Good morning.

We've been talking about evil, we've been talking about the goings on at the Tennessee legislature, the ejection of two young and black and recently-elected legislators.

But also the news is good this week insofar as both of these Congress people, state legislators have been reinstated.

So we're playing out the dynamics of rupture and presence, crucifixion and resurrection. Via Negativa, and Via Creativa. And even these two citizens and leaders have picked up on this imagery from last week's holiday archetypes, both Passover and Easter. Passover after all is a replaying of Exodus, of the freedom, of the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

So all this is swirling around, in the midst of the continued revelations of severely bad decision-making (to put it benignly) by a major figure on the Supreme Court, demonstrating his commitment to far right-wing billionaires over a 20-year period, during which he refused to report any of his millions, literally millions of dollars of gifts. Even though that is required, one of the few things required of the Supreme Court, as an ethical command.

And I bring up at the end of my essay, we're already to one piece of good news, and one piece that helps us to understand evil. The good news is this wonderful encounter between Joan Baez, pretty much a hero of my generation, and this young congressman on a plane, and then the wonderful freedom song they sang together, on landing at the Newark Airport.

As I point out, that brings this linkage of generations around liberation, and civil disobedience and so forth, which was big in my generation around the issues of civil rights, but also around the Vietnam War.

But it's a wonderful thing to see generations getting together around issues of justice and the common good. And then a lot of smiles by the singers, but also by those of us who were exposed to this video. Smiles of happiness, because we do need leadership from the young, and the elders' job is to support the young, and to tell them the stories that can assist them.

And something I've been saying for years that I find in the younger generation a genuine interest in elders; they are seeking wisdom and support from elders.

So this is important: that elders realize they have an important role to play in supporting values that are emerging from the moral outrage of all of us, values around saving the planet, around not giving out assault weapons to ordinary citizens, and around doing something about children and others being murdered on a regular basis in our public places.

So in terms of understanding this more profoundly, I think Otto Rank has an amazing statement at the end of our meditation today. He warns us about "the decadent fear of extinction" ... the decadent fear of extinction again, an inability to deal humanely with death, and therefore, the effort at great immortality projects.

But he says this decadent fear of extinction "is self-created by man who becomes afraid of his own power-ideology, which he has set up against the forces of nature in himself."

So as I say, this means that where our worldview is only about the human, where anthropocentrism reigns, we create demons, demons within ourselves.

And these demons we can name for what they are: Adultism, the putting-down of the young, the envy of the young, is very real. Another demon is racism, blaming things on people who are different than oneself. And ecocide too, is a form of the demon that can lurk inside of us, and ultimately, inside the institutions that we operate in.

Thank you, we'll see you tomorrow.