

Daily Meditation 05/08/2023

Depression Remedies from Nature, Mystics, and Cosmology

Good morning.

We're talking today in our meditation about acedia, and medicine and cures for acedia.

Now I refer to an angry letter I received this past week from a psychologist who didn't want to hear about the connection of acedia to depression. I've met psychologists whose approach to depression is to give pills out. That may help in some circumstances, but I don't think it's anywhere near the whole picture.

We live in a depressed, depressing moment in history, and a culture that is becoming more and more depressed. So actually, depression may be a very sane and healthy response to the matrix, context in which we find ourselves.

Thich Nhat Hanh says that negative seeds are in all of us, and we need to do work to cultivate the seeds of beauty and of peace. So the Via Positiva is work. We have to work at it sometimes.

And he also, of course, makes a point: One flower is made of the whole cosmos. And this is because a flower requires clouds and rain, and sun and sunshine and soil. And, of course, all these elements have a 13.8 billion year history just like all of us do.

So, we deal with cosmology every day. And the gifts that come our way, like flowers, food, and all the rest-- healthy air, waters, should not be taken for granted. And for that sometimes we have to be still, learn some meditation. And Thich Nhat Hanh has practices about breathing in gratitude and breathing out gratitude.

Rilke said, "We should walk our walk of lament on a path of praise." When there is a lot to lament, which there is in our culture today, we have to learn new levels and new practices of praising, go out of our way to remember that which is praiseworthy.

I wrote a book on *Sins of the Spirit, Blessings of the Flesh* where I'm talking about misdirected love of the first chakra, because that is how Aquinas defines sin, as misdirected love. And, of course, that is a Jewish understanding because the Jewish word for sin is missing the mark. It's an archery term about missing the bullseye.

I make the point on page 231: "When cosmology is missing, the experience of the divine good is missing. Blessing is missing. God is no longer Creator of a vast and marvelous world but is reduced to being comforter of our ever tinier, punier human souls, which in turn shrink to something smaller and tinier and tidier. The first chakra can be practically shut down."

Christ says acedia is a shrinking of mind, not from any spiritual good, but from the goodness of God.

So I think there is a raging disease of acedia in our culture today. And simply taking a pill is not enough. We all have to contribute to a regeneration of the values and visions and aspirations of ourselves as human beings at this time in history.

And so much is in jeopardy, including, of course, Mother Earth.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow