

Friends of Silence

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“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Dear Friends ~ Each spring the seeds stir and push up tender shoots through the warming soil; buds swell, lining the tree limbs like tiny jewels. All around there are signs that the Earth is renewing herself, that the Holy relationship of loving reciprocity endures. This is more than reassuring, because by now we must see that we are witnessing the unraveling of the sustaining systems of a myriad of worlds and realms. How shall we make sense of this? Old stories may help. When the Old Woman in the Cave returned to weaving the garment of the world after stirring the stew that sustained the seeds of spring, she found that her painstaking work had come apart and lay in a mess on the cave's floor. She sat within the womb of that holy cave and beheld the utterly tangled strands in deep Silence. For how long the story doesn't say. Only then, out of deep Silence and contemplation, did her hands begin to find the threads in the chaos to weave the unknown world to come. In these uneasy times, when all that we have known and love is fraying, we are invited into that cave and into that moment of Silence, that broad edge of hearts cracked open, that long in-breath. Indeed, as friends and practitioners of Silence, it may be precisely what we are given to do in this time. ~ Lindsay



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**The cosmos dreams in me
while I wait in stillness,
ready to lean a little further
into the heart of the Holy.**

**I, a little blip of life,
a wisp of unassuming love,
a quickly passing breeze,
come once more into Lent.**

**No need to sign me
with the black bleeding ash
of palms, fried and baked.
I know my humus place.**

**This Lent I will sail
on the graced wings of desire,
yearning to go deeper
to the place where
I am one in the One.**

**Oh, may I go there soon,
in the same breath
that takes me to the stars
when the cosmos dreams in me.**

~ Joyce Rupp, "Poem for Lent"

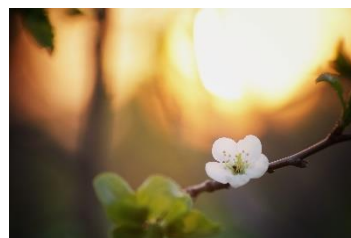
What would it be like to surrender to Mystery? What would it be like to slow down, to stop trying to fix the world for ourselves, for our grandchildren, and for all the creatures of this planet, and instead take their hands, and the hands of our ancestors, and the hands of our great great grandchildren, and with fierce love make a path by walking it?

~ Lindsay McLaughlin

Communion is a deeper, wordless connection in which we acknowledge the sacred woven within each individual life, holding all. Holy within, between, among, and beyond. From the beginning...we live and move and have our being in the flow of mystery. In reclaiming our soul, we reconnect to the soul of the world.

Learning to live in edge times in ways that allow us all to flourish in beauty and joy in the midst of deep sorrow and loss will require brave and committed souls...We must engage in the requisite work that will enable us to live in deep recognition of life in communion.

~ Leah Rumpy in *EARTH & SOUL: RECONNECTING AMID CLIMATE CHAOS*



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Sanctuary is slowing down. The times are urgent, let us make sanctuary. The times are urgent, let us go slowly down to sanctuary. The times are urgent, let us be slowed down by the beings that exceed us. The times are urgent, let us be released from the traps of the things we already know.

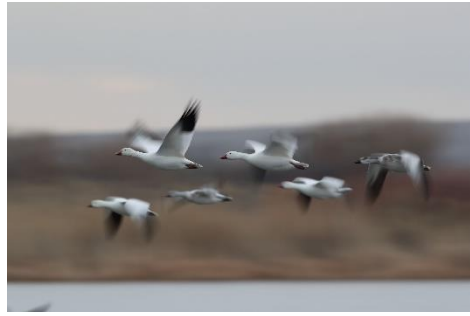
~ Bayo Akomolafe from "Let Us Make Sanctuary" in *Insights at the Edge* podcast with Tami Simon

In the frozen fields of my life
 there are no shortcuts to spring,
 but stories of great birds in migration
 carrying small ones on their backs,
 predators flying next to warblers
 they would, in a different season, eat.

Stunned by the astonishing mix in this uneasy world
 that plunges in a single day from despair
 to hope and back again, I commend my life
 to Ruskin's difficult duty of delight,
 and to that most beautiful form of courage,
 to be happy.

~Jeanne Lohmann from "What the Day Gives" in

THE LIGHT OF INVISIBLE BODIES



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We are beings of Earth who feel the mysterious rhythms of life unfolding. We sense this in the arc from sunrise to sunset, in the migrating patterns of birds and wild animals, in the call of whales in the depths of the oceans...in the smell of spring soil appearing through winter's snow. All of it sings to us in the movement of seasons as the planet finds its way around the sun and back again. These rhythms will ground us anew in the Earth that has brought forth and sustained life for billions of years. The rhythms have changed, yes, with climate change and extinction. We are being uprooted from predictable seasonal time, yet we dare to uncover ways forward. Deep time grounds us...Rediscovering who we are. Finding our purpose as humans to enhance life, not diminish it. This is our endless prayer...

~ Mary Evelyn Tucker, "Learning to Navigate Amid Loss",
 preface to *GREAT TIDE RISING* by Kathleen Dean Moore

Compline always ends with what monastics call the "great silence." We move into the healing silence of the night...Silence is like a river of grace inviting us to leap unafraid into its beckoning depths. It is dark and mysterious in the waters of grace. Yet in the silent darkness we are given new eyes. In the heart of the divine we can see more clearly who we are. We are renewed and cleansed in this river of silence.

~ Macrina Wiederkehr in *SEVEN SACRED PAUSES*

Practicing Silence is the art of letting down the barrier that separates our rational consciousness from the depth of our soul ... of coming into touch with the spiritual world in a way that opens our whole being to the reality of the creative and integrating center... In silence we meet the reality of the inner voice from God which gives inspiration, guidance and direction, and transformation.

~ Morton T. Kelsey in *THE OTHER SIDE OF SILENCE*

My friends, do not lose heart..
 ...One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires...causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these—to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity...Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.



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**The days are cold and brown,
 Brown fields, no sign of green,
 Brown twigs, not even swelling,
 And dirty snow in the woods.
 But as the dark flows in
 The tree frogs begin
 Their shrill sweet singing,
 And we lie on our beds
 Through the ecstatic night,
 Wide awake, cracked open.
 There will be no going back.**

~ May Sarton, "April in Maine" in
COLLECTED POEMS: 1930-1993

~ Clarissa Pinkola Estes in *DO NOT LOSE HEART*