Fríends of Sílence

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"|Sthere enough Silence for the Word to be heard?"

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Dear Friends ~ This season of Thanksgiving sings with resonance in my soul. I am grateful to live in an intentional community where we all have our tasks and teams to keep things running smoothly. I'm on the garden team, blessed to come together with others to plant, water, weed, and—indeed—harvest both bounty and beauty.

On the personal front, I'm deeply grateful to have weathered major surgery which brought a short halt to my gardening. But it was an experience that offered more opportunities to practice gratitude as my husband took over the cooking, as well as the watering of our home garden, along with his own tasks. Now it is autumn, and I am back to the garden—ever more grateful for the bounty of the earth, the love of family and friends, and the joy that comes with harvest.

As our family gathers for a Thanksgiving feast, I hope the grandchildren will humor me while we all sing: "Oh, the Lord is good to me, and so I thank the Lord for giving me the things I need, the sun and the rain and the apple seed. The Lord is good to me."

And to you, dear readers, hold close to loved ones, pray for the world, give and breathe gratitude. Carry the spirit of thanksgiving with greetings to those you meet. Cross paths of thankfulness. May we harvest a brighter world. \sim Mary Ann



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Gratitude, therefore, takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to the new wonder to praise the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good not by hearsay, but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference.

Gratitude softens us.

~ Nan Merrill from her interpretation of "Psalm 90" in PSALMS FOR PRAYING

Every day I see or hear something that more or less kills me with delight, that leaves me like a needle in the haystack of light. It is what I was born for to look, to listen, to lose myself inside this soft world to instruct myself over and over in joy, and acclamation.

Nor am I talking about the exceptional, the fearful, the dreadful, the very extravagant but of the ordinary, the common, the very drab, the daily presentations. Oh, good scholar, I say to myself. how can you help but grow wise with such teachings as these the untrimmable light, of the world, the ocean's shine, the prayers that are made out of grass?

~ Thomas Merton in THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE

Sometimes our light goes out but is blown again into flame by an encounter with another human being. Each of us owes the deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this inner light.

~ Albert Schweitzer in MEMOIRS OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH, translated by Erica Anderson

Every minute of every hour of every day you are making the world, just as you are making yourself, and you might as well do it with generosity and kindness and style.

~ Rebecca Solnit, from the article "We could be heroes" on theguardian.com

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.

~ Melody Beattie, from the poem "Gratitude"

~ Mary Oliver, "Mindful" in WHY I WAKE EARLY

Awakening in a moment of peace

l give thanks to the source of all peace

as I set forth Shutterstock Ima into the day the birds sing with new voices And I listen with new ears and give thanks nearby the flower called Angel's Trumpet blows in the breeze and 1 give thanks my feet touch the grass still wet with dew and I give thanks both to my mother earth for sustaining my steps and to the seas cycling once again to bring forth new life sun-fire the dewdrops become jeweled with the morning sun's fire and 1 give thanks you can see forever when the vision is clear in this moment each moment 1 give thanks

~ Harriet Kofalk, from the song "Awakening"

Can you see the holiness in those things you take for granted—a paved road or a washing machine? If you concentrate on finding what is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.

~ Rabbi Harold Kushner in WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE



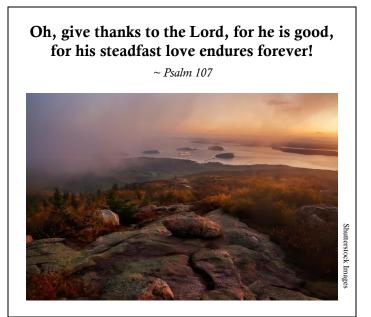
We often remember to be grateful for big events, like graduating from university or getting married, but it can be more difficult to feel grateful for the small things we do every day. Reminding yourself that eating a meal, for example, is in itself special and can be very powerful. Your immediate awareness of the food in front of you, combining flavors while removing hunger, is a great way to enjoy gratitude as often as you eat! Another is

feeling grateful in the morning for being able to comfortably sleep at night. We gain comfort, satisfaction and peace by practicing mindfulness and gratitude in this repeated fashion.

~ Najma Khorrami, from the article "Four Ways to Wire Your Brain for Gratitude" on mindfulness.org

Everything is here for the same reason, for manifestation and celebration. But the humans articulate this. The others cannot articulate it reflectively. They can be a manifestation, but they cannot reflect on that. Humans can, therefore our role is to be spokespersons for the universe and to appreciate the universe as the context in which the Divine and human meet.

~ Thomas Berry



Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.

~ William Arthur Ward

Gratefulness has three steps: not missing the opportunity, appreciating the opportunity, and using or enjoying the opportunity. By this method we come fully alive, full of joy, which is what we are all longing for.

~ Brother David Steindl-Rast