

Daily Meditation 12/07/2021

Liberating Oscar the Grouch & Becoming Camels

Good morning.

We're talking this morning about emerging from the garbage can where Oscar the Grouch lived, to not focus so much right now on the struggle involved regarding the toxic masculine, and the put-down of women in so many ways, including even ignoring the reality of incest and rape when talking about abortion.

In the recent gathering of the Supreme Court to talk about abortion, incest and rape are not mentioned once. And in both of laws that the court will be deciding this year, the Mississippi law and the Texas law, both of them are in effect endorsing rape and incest, because they do not make any exception in their rigid abortion obsession, around rape and incest.

M.C. Richards, a wonderful philosopher, poet, potter, painter, and human being, says, "The discipline in doing pottery and centering on clay, but also in our own lives -- the discipline comes in when we have to pay attention to what we don't like, aren't interested in, don't understand, or mistrust: when you have to read the poetry of our enemies, within or without."

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Albert Einstein says "the greatness of an artist lies in the building of an inner world and in the ability to reconcile this inner world with the outer world."

And so that's what we're trying to do when we address the prophetic issues that are so hot in our time. In a response to a recent daily meditation, one person, a man, wrote in talking about abortion, and said something like "I want spirituality, I don't want politics."

Here is Mahatma Gandhi: "Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics, do not know what religion means."

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I think Jesus knew something about both. And he paid the price for speaking out about both.

Arturo Paoli says, "To be religious is to give your life so that the world may be more beautiful, more just, more at peace. It is to prevent egotistical and self-serving ends from disrupting the harmony of the whole."

...from disrupting the harmony of the whole.

I alluded to Sesame Street, and I just recently learned that a friend of mine quite literally lives on Sesame Street in New York -- not in the garbage can, I assure you -- but she actually lives there.

And humor is a good thing. In emerging out of the garbage can, recognizing the internal paradox and surprise that is wrapped up in every joke really.

And I was thinking the other day about this old chestnut you may know about, because this is the Christmas season, about a little boy who was asked to draw a picture of Christmas and all those stories. And he drew a picture of an airplane en route to Egypt. And she said, "What's this all about?"

"Well," he said, "this is about Pontius Pilate and Jesus and Mary and Joseph, the little baby Jesus making a flight to Egypt."

So the idea that yeah, there was a flight to Egypt, but it wasn't a 20th century flight. They were fleeing on a donkey, if they were lucky. And of course, Egypt, in the Bible, represents the worst possible oppression. That is what the whole Exodus story is about, isn't it -- leaving Egypt. And of course, this kid heard the word "Pilate" and just figured, well, sure this as an airplane pilot, Pontius pilot, Pontius the pilot.

And so just that, I think, is fun to realize: all our words are relative. And this child did not know about Pontius pilot being a hiree of the Roman Empire back near the end of Jesus's life, not when he was a baby. But he put the word flight and fleeing to Egypt, the flight to Egypt with the idea of Pontius pilot as a pilot on a plane -- why not?

And then there's another ritual that I love to share. And that is the ritual of eating a strawberry and I learned this from Jose Hobday, a Seneca woman. I don't have a strawberry right with me, but you pick it up and you turn it over. You meditate on its beauty and its shape, and of course it's bright red, and the shape is that of a heart.

And then you eat each bite, very carefull'y meditating on each bite, and you chew and undergo the beauty in this suckering of the delicious taste of a strawberry. Then you're left with a little green stem, but you also eat that, and that is not going to kill you. But it is unpleasant, it's bitter.

And the teaching is that life has this sweetness to it, and the beauty and wetness of a beautiful strawberry on the one hand, but it also contains the bitterness and we do swallow both in our efforts to to live fully and share fully.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.