

Daily Meditation 12/09/21

Julian of Norwich: Inventor of the Word Enjoy

Good morning.

Today we continue our effort to fill our souls like a camel fills its hump with water, filling ourselves with the water and wetness of the via positiva as we find it spoken of in the mystics. And of course, Julian of Norwich, who we cite in the essay, is a very strong proponent of joy, even though she was living through the worst pandemic ever, the bubonic plague, which ended up killing between 40% and 50% of the citizens of her country and indeed, of Europe in general.

Julian says that "to behold God in all things is to live in complete joy."

...Live in complete joy, that's quite a promise, isn't it? That we're capable of living in complete joy, that joy is that big a thing - it wraps everything, it holds everything, even the suffering and the darkness.

"To behold God in all things." That's the realization, that the breakthrough happens, as Meister Eckhart puts it: "in breakthrough, I learned that God and I are one."

So that kind of awakening, that "oneing," as Julian calls it, is the pathway to finding joy everywhere. Even in our smallest activities, Aquinas says, Joy is a human's noblest act. So we bring it to everything we do. It's with us all the time, if we wake up to it, if we wake up to it.

Now, yesterday was the feast day of the Immaculate Conception in the Roman Catholic tradition. And December 12, just a few days away, is the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. And then of course, Christmas, which is coming up, is obviously a big feast day of Mary, the mother of Jesus: she gave birth to Jesus.

So really, the, the season of December is very much a season of motherhood of the divine feminine. And this too, in a dark time of the year, that this season represents.

So I think that's significant, especially as we're moving into more discussion about the shadow masculine and then the golden masculine, if you will, the healthy and the sacred masculine. Because healthy masculinity incorporates the divine feminine, incorporates the goddess, a healthy man welcomes the Divine Feminine into himself, but also into the women that he knows; he is not threatened by the strength of the feminine.

And I think it's significant that in this month, in this very season, there are these three great feast days of the divine feminine, that are going on underneath the surface of a secular and commercial society, that there's this invitation to open ourselves up to the power of the divine feminine.

And of course, Our Lady of Guadalupe represents the power of the indigenous closeness to the earth. She appeared in an area of Mexico that honored the goddess for many, many centuries before the Europeans arrived. And she spoke to the young man, the teenager, in his own indigenous language. And this was just 10 years after the Spanish had colonized and pretty much wiped out the indigenous people in that area.

So it really is a feast day of a strong, strong feminine energy that recognizes the suffering of people, but stands for something alternative, for the kind of values that Julian of Norwich is celebrating: the values of joy and justice and healing and mothering. The real power of compassion therefore, that all of us, women and men, are capable of.

It is significant, I think, that she appeared to a young man, a teenager, but a male teenager, in this story, unlike the story of Lourdes, where she appeared to a young girl.

So all this I think is reason to celebrate and define the joy and the beauty everywhere. As Ernesto Cardenal says, "Our appetites and our anxieties are all about achieving union with one another, and with the cosmos."

And this is what he's celebrating when he talks about how

...beauty, joy, and pleasure appear in beings in a diluted form, but all things are nonetheless bathed in and illumined by beauty in varying degrees, as though overlaid with a diffuse light. God alone is light and is purity and is the focus of all that is lighted. But all beings participate in beauty, in light, and therefore, in giving us joy and healing, especially in this season of darkness.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.