

Daily Meditation 05-26-22

Evil and the Sacred

Good morning.

It seems more fitting than ever that we are meditating these days, these weeks on evil. As I pointed out, in yesterday's daily meditation or two days ago, we began these meditations when the massacre in the grocery store in Buffalo occurred ten days ago. Now we have a new massacre, still another one, in a children's elementary school in Texas near the border. Nineteen children killed and one teacher...it seems to go on and on, doesn't it, and so many lessons.

One wonders when we will learn.

And once again, the killer is a young man who, to celebrate his 18th birthday, he bought himself AR-15. A gun meant to kill people with: why is this so easy to do in the United States of America? And he was bullied in school as a child; his mother was on drugs and was not there for him. He was raised by his grandmother, whom he attacked by shooting in the face before he went to shoot and kill 19 children and wound another 14.

But indeed, he wounded hundreds of children, all the children who lives through that terror will remember that day for the rest of their life. Of course all the families who are affected, have something killed in their souls and hearts as well when their children meet such a premature and violent death.

And today's meditation is about the sacred, looking for the sacred. And a reminder that the seven chakras help to name the sacred in us. But when there is misdirected love, as Aquinas calls it, this energy that is positive and light-filled, turns into something very, very dark, and, of course, dangerous.

The self-hatred which we talked about, a couple of meditations ago, the self-hatred that is behind so much hatred, so much violence. Indeed, this young killer told his friends how much he felt hatred toward himself, and even scarred his face on occasion, deliberately to name that same feeling.

Again, if there were rites of passage for young people, especially young men, would that carry us beyond that sphere of self-hatred to something greater?

To what Heschel calls in today's meditation, the holy, as he says, that

The biblical answer to evil is not the good but the holy. It is an attempt to raise people to a higher level of existence, where people are not alone, confronted with evil. Living in the light of the face of God bestows upon a person a power of love that enables them to overcome the powers of evil.

Many people have had difficult childhoods, but not all of them turn into killers. Mary Oliver had a very difficult childhood, being a victim of incest from her father, and a denial of it from her mother. Didn't turn into a killer. She tells us that it took her years to heal, but that her healing obviously was very real for the latter part of her life. She called herself a praise poet... a praise poet. So she underwent a profound transformation in her own rituals of

learning to move on and finding the good, finding the sacred in nature, which is constitutes so much of her praise and her poems and her celebration of life.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.