

Daily Meditation 11-04-22

On Voting

Good morning.

Our meditation this morning is simply called "On Voting"....On Voting.

And I go through a series of statements about what we're voting for.

We vote for the sky, and the air, and the waters, and our mother the earth.

Vote for the animals, and the oceans, and the finned ones who live therein.

Vote for the poor and the forgotten, the victims of war.

It almost sounds like a prayer, doesn't it? And in a way, voting is a prayer. It's an action of the *via transformativa*. It comes out of our love of life, our love for others, the *via positiva*.

It comes out of our silence, our deep silence and contemplation, the *via negativa*, and also our suffering, and our grieving, and our empathy for others who are in trouble and suffering, and grieving3...and who is not today?

It comes out of our *via creativa*. Because voting is a choice; for the very word "*electio*" in Latin is a word for choice: election, choice, voting. It is an act of creativity to vote, you make your decision based on your values and what you want the world to be like.

And of course, voting is an act of the *via transformativa*, of trying to improve the world, of healing it, bringing justice where there is injustice, bringing compassion where there is separation and violence.

It's so easy for us to take voting for granted and to take democracy for granted. Josef Pieper, a great scholar of medieval philosophy and Thomas Aquinas in particular, says it is part and parcel of bourgeois consciousness, of bourgeois living and middle class consciousness, to take for granted.

To me that's exactly what mystics do not do: they do not take for granted even one breath. Every breath is a gift, our existence a gift. According to the poet Rilke, our existence is a miracle.

And I think that is borne out by today's new science: the 13.8 billion years that brought us here to this special, unique, modest planet, full of beauty and possibility.

But at this time in American history, and indeed in history around the world, there is this movement, very strong and always well financed, of authoritarianism which includes, baked into it, violence.

We see this playing out in the media every day in terrifying circumstances, like the invasion of Nancy Pelosi's home and the beating of her 82-year-old husband with a hammer. Like the refusal of many, many political leaders to really speak out forcefully about that violence, and of course, the January 6 violence.

So violence accompanies fascism, violence accompanies authoritarianism; therefore, we live in a time when we cannot take voting for granted.

We cannot take democracy for granted. This really could be the last election in America that is universally democratic, because we have people running for governor, for secretaries of state, people who count the votes, etc., who refuse to say that they will go by the election results.

There are some states that are setting up systems whereby the legislature of the state will choose the winner, not those who count the ballots of the citizens.

So democracy is definitely on the line. Let us not take it for granted.

Let us vote, and vote wisely.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.