

Daily Meditations 03/01/2023

Saved by a Sense of the Sacred: Sister Dorothy Stang, part ii

Good morning.

In today's meditation, we continue our journey with Sister Dorothy Stang. And we call on Thomas Berry's teaching that wonder and our sense of the sacred recur. We will recover them only if we appreciate the universe beyond ourselves as a revelatory experience, and so forth.

And these words of Berry very much speak to me of the tradition of the Cosmic Christ, of doxa or glory of the Divine as found in nature.

And in my book on Hildegard of Bingen, the second chapter is on "Living Words and the Cosmic Christ: Hildegard Meets Mary Oliver."

But Mary Oliver has a marvelous poem on the sacredness of nature, on therefore the Cosmic Christ, called "At the River Clarion." She begins,

I don't know who God is exactly.

...I don't know who God is exactly.

But I'll tell you this.

*I was sitting in the river named Clarion, on a water splashed stone
and all afternoon I listened to the voices of the river talking.*

*Whenever the water struck a stone it had something to say,
and the water itself, and even the mosses trailing under the water.*

And slowly, very slowly, it became clear to me what they were saying.

Said the river, I am part of holiness.

And I too, said the stone. And I too, whispered the moss beneath the water.

So that is the meaning. Wonderfully succinct, that Mary Oliver shares with us about the Cosmic Christ, the sacredness of nature. *I am part of holiness, said the river and the stone and the moss*, you see. And this is someone who has re-covered the loss of the sacred. And as a poet she is sharing with us, with her special craft and gift of choosing words carefully. You're getting the story clear to us.

And I think this is a big part of what inspired Sister Dorothy Stang to continue her work in spite of the obvious dangers that were involved.

So beauty and truth have the capacity to hold us and to strengthen us and to give us the courage, the big heart, to go about our business of hearing, celebrating and upholding justice, and holding those involved in injustice to account. This is why truth and justice go together.

And we're grateful that Sister Dorothy stayed true to the truth that she saw on a daily basis. May we all do the same.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.