

Daily Meditation 06/09/2023

Lessons to Learn from the Current Wildfires

Good morning.

Today we're reflecting on the wildfires that are raging in Canada, and their smoke is descending into United States. Sixteen different states are seriously affected by these fires, even as far south as North Carolina and Virginia; the Midwest in Michigan and Ohio; and of course, the New England states; Pennsylvania and Philadelphia; very strongly New York, and Washington, DC.

Now, living as I do in Northern California, we've been having this wildfire phenomenon for several years now. And it really is distressing, because this area for all the time I've been living here is famous for its blue skies. But when the wildfire season comes around, as it has the last few years, very fiercely, the sky is no longer blue. And it's really something, how simply one can take for granted the blue sky and yellow sun.

Now they're experiencing out east, the red sun that we've experienced here too, when the smog, and fog and smoke of the fire take over.

So for me, this is a very, very big lesson in not taking for granted. And in not presuming that the earth is going to continually be benign toward us when we have not been benign toward it. And of course, this is what Hildegard of Bingen warned about more than 800 years ago, that if humans interrupt the web of justice, which is the balance of nature, that creation will come back to wake humans up or to expel us.

So I draw out the point in my meditation about the recovery, how events like this, emergencies like this, can assist us to recover a sense of the sacredness of nature.

And I'd like to quote from Thomas Berry in his foreword to this book on Thomas Merton the Catholic monk's writings on nature, called *When the Trees Say Nothing*. Here's Thomas Berry:

Everywhere we find ourselves invaded by the world of the sacred. Such was the experience of Thomas Merton. Such is the wonder that he is communicating to us. And the absence of a sense of the sacred is a basic flaw in many of our efforts at ecologically or environmentally adjusting our human presence to the natural world. It has been said, 'We will not save what we do not love.' It is also true that we will neither love nor save what we do not experience as sacred. Eventually, only our sense of the sacred will save us.

So this is an affirmation of lessons to be learned from a crisis like this, that so much of North America, Canada, and much of the United States is undergoing. It is also a reminder why the Order of the Sacred Earth is a reality in today's world. It is a shift of consciousness that we need to get into. And it is a response to the signs of our times: the signs of our times being the climate change, and all of that is involved in that breakup, that rupture of Mother Earth, that we are all experiencing.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.