

Daily Meditation 06/29/2023

A Solstice Photo and Story Shared from the Camino, Part II

Good morning.

Today is our second meditation in a row about a photograph that I received from my friend who is currently on a pilgrimage, the Camino pilgrimage runs through France and Spain and also Portugal. And as I point out in today's meditation, there are many stories that come together in this particular story, this photograph from the person who took it.

So we have stories about war, the Vietnam War: his parents fled when his mother was pregnant with him. And they made this harrowing journey on foot over rivers and mountains and hills and dales and he was born when they arrived in a integration camp in Thailand.

And he grew up there, spent his childhood there, speaking Thai. And he himself is of the Mien lineage, which is a indigenous group that is dying out in Laos. And then he became a Buddhist and eventually came to America as a teenager and ended up teaching mathematics in high school.

But the fact that he's a Buddhist and is currently doing a Christian pilgrimage, if you will, or pilgrimage along a Christian way to a Christian destination called St. James Compostelo -- all that, I think, is a sign of our times: that we have a new generation of Buddhists who do Christian pilgrimages, and we had a lot of Jews and Christians who were doing Buddhist meditation and living in Plum Village, Thich Nhat Hanh's monastery. All this overcoming of dualisms, and overcoming of being in one box is a sign of our times.

One sociologist has said that a sign of post-modernism is that we all belong to many communities at once. So many communities we should write Etc., period, after our names.

And another way to talk about this era, besides moving from modern to postmodern, is moving from the Piscean age to the Aquarian Age.

One thing that's interesting is that the Christian movement, Christian Church, has existed only during the Age of Pisces, because it began right around the time of Jesus, and it gave way to the Age of Aquarius just around the turn of the of the century, very recently, therefore.

So many of the structures that were built up during the modern age and during the Age of Pisces are not serving us well today; they're melting before our eyes.

I recently published an article with *Progressive Christianity Magazine* called "From Nuns to Nones," because the latest statistics on Nones -- that means people who do not identify with any religion, but they're not necessarily atheists, they just don't identify with any religion anymore -- that group is now growing in America to be 28% of the population, which makes them equivalent to the Roman Catholic Church and the evangelical community, the two largest religious groups in America. Now there's a third, and that is Nones.

And the first part of my title, "From Nuns to Nones," is just a recognition that the Catholic orders are dying out of this time. They've served their purpose in their particular form, the form in which we find them.

So all this is going on, it can be confusing, but it can also be very inviting to give birth to new forms, and including the Order of the Sacred Earth that I and young people have been birthing over the last several years.

But we should be expecting this, and instead of seeing it as a problem, recognize it as an opportunity.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.