

October 30, 2024

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

REFLECTIONS OUT OF THIN AIR

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

“Because no matter who we are or where we come from, we’re all entitled to the basic human rights of clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and healthy land to call home.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING III

Reflection

Flying north to visit my family recently I was surprised to be moving through miles of smoke plumes at a reasonably high altitude. At the time of this journey, there were three major wildfires in Southern California. We were too far north to be impacted by those fires as we were speeding by the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Southern Cascades. Searching my mind’s eye, I visualized the latest Fire and Smoke map included with my air quality app -- every nerd should have one. As the image came into memory view, I recalled

that many fires peppered western North America and that there were several overlapping smoke plumes covering a vast geography. As we jetted through the sooty pall, I sat in my compact seat quietly mourning the loss of environment and life below.

Late yesterday afternoon, I heard geese honking overhead as they made the flight to their winter destination. On catching the distinct cry of the skein, I wondered if they had to fly through the smokey *shmuts*. What option do they have but to do what they have done for millennia?

Maybe 15 years ago, there was a huge Santa Ana wind-stoked wildfire here in Orange County. The sky was so smoke-laden that green traffic lights appeared blue and ash was falling like snowflakes. It seemed like the world was going to end and was, at the time, an exceptional occurrence. Does it seem like these disasters have become more commonplace? From hurricanes to droughts, rising sea levels, deforestation and soil depletion, and water scarcity, the existential tipping point due to global warming appears imminent.

So now what? It would make sense that there needs to be a global unified resolve to do something sooner than later. Pope Francis, in *Laudato Sí*, offers an integral ecological approach, synergizing environmental and economic approaches and social ecology to help heal our wounded planet. “An integral ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good, a central and unifying principle of social ethics.” (156) This makes quite a bit of sense to me - - working together in a unified and deliberate fashion, recognizing the variety and dignity of everyone’s unique contribution. Let us pray.



Colored Sky

Photo by Julie Mussché

For Pondering

- How does the reality of our times intersect with your spiritual life?
 - What is God calling you to heal in our wounded world?
-

For Prayer

Excerpt from A Christian Prayer In Union with Creation

*God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.*

*O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.*

LAUDATO SI (246)

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