



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

Image by Christine Sponchia

SIGNIFICANCE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH

By Sr. Christine Hilliard, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

How does our tribal ancestor, Father of Many Nations (Abraham), fit into this way of trusting? What can we learn from what he found? If Father of Many Nations found good standing with Creator because he earned it by hard work, then he would be able to boast. But not in the eyes of the Great Spirit. But what do the Sacred Teachings tell us? "Father of Many Nations put his trust in Creator. This is what gave him good standing in the eyes of the Great Spirit." We know what people gain from hard work is not a gift, but something earned. But when people do no work but simply trust in Creator to release them from their spiritual darkness, this kind of trusting gives them good standing in the eyes of the Great Spirit.

ROMANS 4:1-5

FIRST NATION VERSION: AN INDIGENOUS TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This chapter in Romans is a midrash [*an early Jewish commentary or interpretation on a Scripture text*] on Genesis 15:6: “Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteous.” This means that Abraham’s faith in God was regarded as the “right” attitude of humans toward God. Said another way: one must believe rather than merely achieve. Belief is an action, not a mental exercise.

Basically, using Abraham as a model, Paul is reminding us that what we do isn’t what makes the difference in our living; rather it is what we let God do with and through us. The Divine invitation is for us and all of creation to partner with the Holy One in the process of nourishing life. On our part, that means paying attention to our Creator’s ways of being and doing -- and imitating those ways.



Chino Hills State Park, CA
Photo by Alicia Rodriguez

For Pondering

- Looking back on the last few days, when did you work with God for the healing of our world? How did you know that you needed to follow this particular action?

- Which phrase from the First Nation Version of Romans 4:1-5 caught your attention?
 - What prayer forms within you from that phrase? Share it with your God.
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