

April 14, 2024

Pr. Steve

Texts: 1 John 3:1-2; Psalm 24; Luke 24: 36-47

In the name of God, Abba/Imma, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

This Sabbath weekend most hopefully all of our Interfaith congregations through I-SRV are speaking about the earth itself in anticipation of the EarthFest celebration next Sunday. I hope you're all coming, participating. It will be a blessed event, and it is incredibly important for our times that people see us together, affirming life on this earth.

'If people only knew, if people only knew how bad it is, wouldn't they do something? It's not only the youth like me, it's the elders. If only people knew what is going on—the polar ice caps, and the polar bears, and the Amazon. If people only knew, wouldn't they change things?'

No, we won't. We haven't stopped yet. This is the strangest obstacle in humanity. Is it our minds? Is it at our consciousness? Where does this obstinacy and inertia come from? It's a disaster, and we don't want to do anything. Wow! We really don't. Braiding Sweetgrass says [where?], 'Well, maybe, since we can't change anything else, apparently, we could at least become a little bit more honest in our language.'

Do you know about Superfund Sites? Yeah, can I remind you? These are disaster areas. So, God forbid, now we've just written them off. We seal them off, and say '*They'll never be reconstructed, and there's just nothing we can do about it.*' Bakersfield [CA] has one of these. Lake Onondaga, the lake named after the very tribe that wrote the Haudenosaunee Invocation, is a superfund site. 70 years ago [it was] poisoned to death, rotten, no future. We killed the lake. So, maybe we should call these 'Industrial Feces Sites', any objections? And we just want to tell the people living within 500 miles of these, '**Don't Go Near**', and we hope your children aren't contaminated and poisoned, or your grandchildren, but...

Aren't we strange creatures? It's not the hidden mysteries of life. I keep on saying that it's the stuff right in front of us we don't want to face or deal with. Yeah, yeah. And there seems to be underlying all of our eco-efforts which are really good—and good intentions, and good people trying to do good things—underneath it there is the sense of 'it may not work. Right? I mean, '*Are compostable forks really going to save us?*' Hmm, I don't know.

And the Psalms are such a contrast with who we are and how we express ourselves.

"Who is fit to take God's place? Those with a passion for truth, those who abhor injustice, those who know the earth is sacred." [Psalm 24]

Can you feel the backbone in that? It's God's voice—things must change.

"Who is fit? Show yourself." [Psalm 24]

This is why people don't want to read the Bible. It will take us to places we're not ready for. That's the real truth.

There's no poverty greater than prosperousness. There is no misery greater than affluence, because full bellies in the First World, full bellies are prone to blindness, and lethargy, and dementia, and indifference towards the sanctity of the earth. It's very dangerous, really dangerous.

Look at one word, 'land', and how do we define it? *Land*. Are we all talking the same thing? Is it simply real estate property to be exchanged, bought and sold? Is it open pit mines that, you know, exploit what you want? *That's the land. That's why it's here.* Or is it our exclusive recreation zones. Now, we've gotten very good about this, that we like to protect-our skiing places... Or, is land for subsistence living? That would be another take on it, wouldn't it?... Or is it a sacred gift?

The natural world—is it just here for human beings? Or, is it sacred presence which we get to commune with, in awe, and wonder, and intimacy? Can we see how much love God has lavished upon us? [1 John 3: 1]

When you woke up this morning, the earth was still here. You had something to step on when you got out of bed. Oxygen was still flowing, and carbon dioxide. We have water. I just love how we got to get millions of miles out in space to find out if there's vapors of water out there. We're surrounded by oceans, right, but we're fascinated, '*Maybe they have vapors.*' We're inundated—do you see how much love has been lavished on us?

Your whole life is a miracle. It's a miracle that we're here. But until we see it, until we know it, until we love it, until we live from there, it's just one damn day after another. Wow, the pettiness with which our lives are reduced.

Thomas Merton said he gets up before the dawn every day, because he cannot afford to miss that most spectacular miracle—the illumination of the sun breaking forth, the universe singing in songs and silence. A new day. A new day—not like any other day—this day will never come again. We get to be here today. Wow!

And he said '*In light of that early morning sun, for a moment, we have that clarity that all of the machinations of government, and war machines, and politics, and industry, and technology, all of it, amounts to the bickerings of mice.*' But we have a day to be alive, and to love the love with which we have been lavished.

"My friends, we are already God's children, and what we shall be we don't know." [1 John 3:2] But we are already God's children, called to live in the joy, and the beauty, and the creativity of this day, like Easter Day, a day that had never come before.

May we rise up like those first disciples, who discovered not only the wounds in the hands and the palms and the side, but a great spiritual teacher who loves fish. That's what I love about Christianity. You don't have to get to the seventh rung of the highest heaven of ecstatic praise and joy for God to accept you, you 'low lifes'.

No. "*You got any fish? Let's eat some fish.*"

Practice Resurrection. Amen. Amen, amen into eternity. We now know we'll be eating fish.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

The peace which surpasses all human understanding, keep your hearts and minds in that resurrecting Christ. Amen..