

April 23, 2023

Pr. Steve

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

From the single root, letters in Latin—H U M—we get four inter-related words in English.

*Humus*—that fertile layer of the earth, from which everything can grow—that most precious layer. Do you know that it takes a thousand years to create one inch of humus, upon which our lives depend?

Second word, *human*. We are of the earth. We are here to care for it, to respond to it, to be the consciousness of the earth.

Third word, *humor*. Human beings aren't alive unless they are laughing. When you are around people who can't laugh, get away! (Accept that truth.) Humor is human beings alive!

And the fourth word is *humility*. Hmm. That's what really makes a human being. It is said that the most humble creature you will ever meet is the earth itself, because she allows us to walk on her for all of our days, and she never complains. Of course, in ancient China it was taught that human beings exist in order to provide acupuncture for the earth. Every step you take today and this week is massaging the earth to help you remember where you are. Ahhh.

(Pointing to a large rock) This is a Vishnu schist. This stone is from the bottom-most layer of the Grand Canyon. It is 3 billion years old. You will never touch anything older in your lifetime (and you're allowed to touch it later on). It was also hiked out of the base of the Grand Canyon--before it became illegal. And this is true, because I got it from the former Chief Geo-physicist of Chevron. Ok? 3 billion years old which means it's half of the life of our Sun. It's a great meditation piece, isn't it? If you give it time, it will speak to you, deeply and profoundly.

It is not, friends, just the indigenous people, and the pagans, who care about the earth. It has been deeply part of the formation of the Christian community, but--kind of forgotten over the years--that what we have understood through our Christian ancestors is that the whole of creation came to be through the Christ, who is that endlessly creative Source of Life.

*"In the beginning was the Word and nothing was made without the Word. Through the Word everything came into existence."*

We need to begin living that way. We are choosing to do so, but more and more and more, we need to live from that identity. The whole of creation is the Body of Christ. The whole of creation is the Body of Christ. We are in the body, and part of the body, and here to care for the body of Christ. It's not out there; it's not somewhere else.

So--there's a kind of cool thing emerging. I'm not saying it's a movement yet, but, in New Zealand--you may have heard-- that they have recently sanctioned the rights of personhood to rivers and mountains. That's right. It's not enough. It's a first step. It's moving in the right direction, but it's not enough, because then we all go around proclaiming, "*My rights!*" On the left and the right--Berkeley is as bad as southern Alabama. "*My rights!! My rights*".

No, we need to be connected, connected, and not only that, we need to be living in relationship with the earth and each other—because *“we do not save what we do not love.”* And a special word for us, but it’s not ours alone, is finding that you live in communion--communion with the whole of life, communion with Vishnu, communion with all that is, so that...

The sky is our prayer,  
the flowers are our prayer,  
the creatures and trees are our prayer.  
This life becomes a prayer in Christ. Amen.

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