

Imago Scriptura: invitation to meditation with the photo as anchor. I'll read several passages as invitations for reflection, then say more about the context of the photo, and how it has shaped my spiritual journey.

In my defenselessness, my safety lies. ACIM, Lesson 153.
Where have I put up barriers, defenses in my heart? When have I relied on my ego's strength, instead of surrendering to the safety of Spirit's wisdom? When have I participated in my own diminishment? Where is Spirit calling me beyond the borders of fear and othering?

Isaiah 61: 1-2/ Luke 4:18-19

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Questions by Rose Marie Quilter rcsj

What if
your wounds
are merely a summons
to slip beyond the surface
of old scars
to find a strange and secret door
that opens to a night sky
full of stars?
What if
you allow your breath
its full expansive flow?

What if your sorrow is refusal
to let go?
What if
today invites you,
forsaking why and how -
to listen to the invitation,
here and now,
to live within the Heart of Love?
Might you at last embrace
in this very time and place
the “yes,” the joy of Grace?

From ***Abide*** by Macrina Wierdekreh:

Learn to listen! The voice inviting you is voiceless. Most ancient of all voices. enticing voice without words. Listen from within the cells of your being. From the marrow of your bones, listen. From the deepest source of your life, listen. A holy vibration, a gentle movement, a persistent tugging – summons you into the deepening places.

Learn to go deep! Like waves of the sea you are being pulled back into the depth. Embrace the depths. *Deep calls unto Deep*. There is a depth in you to which you must return. Most silent of all calls. A voice without words calls you to the deepening places.

Learn to abide! Remain in Christ as Christ remains in you. Be like a sponge. Soak up the Word of God. Absorb it. Make the Word your home. Live in the word. Abide. Dwell. Inhabit. Reside. Trust the deepening places.

Learn to be silent! Silent as the leaves that fall, silent as the blossoming flowers, silent as the moment before dawn. You are being summoned into the temple of silence. Practice silence, for this voiceless voice can be heard only in the shrine of silence. You are being chosen for the deepening places.

All inhabitants of the globe are now neighbors ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great world house in which we have to live together black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu — a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

However deeply American Negroes are caught in the struggle to be at last at home in our homeland of the United States, we cannot ignore the larger world house in which we are also dwellers. Equality with whites will not

solve the problems of either whites or Negroes if it means equality in a world society stricken by poverty and a universe doomed to extinction by war.

All inhabitants of the globe are now neighbors.

In her book ***Becoming Wise***, Krista Tippett writes about love in a chapter titled ***A Few Things I've Learned***:

If we are stretching to live wiser and not just smarter, we will aspire to learn what love means, how it arises and deepens, how it withers and revives, what it looks like as a private good but also a common good. I long to make this word echo differently in hearts and ears-- not less complicated, but differently so. Love as muscular, resilient. Love as social-- not just about who we are intimately, but how we are together, in public... Because it is the best of which we are capable, love is also supremely exacting...It crosses chasms between us, and likewise brings them into relief.

...Love is the superstar virtue of virtues and the most watered down word in the English language. And what we've done with the word, we've done with this thing-- this possibility, this essential bond, this act. we've made it private, contained it in family, when its audacity lies in its potential to cross tribal lines... Its true measure is a quality of sustained, practical care. We've lived it as a feeling, when it is a way of being. It is the elemental experience we all desire and seek, most of our days to give and receive.

...What is love? Answer the question through the story of your life.

The US southern border stretches for nearly 2000 miles, 1200 of them along the Mexico/Texas border. I took this photo of wild Lantana– a symbol of protection, good luck, joy and adaptability– growing up through barbed wire during my one mile walk of border witness last week.

What is love? Answer the question with the story of your own life.

My life story now includes the story of my week spent at the border, witnessing the stories of women and their families, and the strength of their communities. Yes there are heartbreaking stories of living in the margins: poverty, abuse, lack of basic municipal supports we are able to take for granted: safe water; safe sewage treatment; lighted and paved streets; access to schools and shopping.

There are stories of DACA– the dreamers– that are now entwined in my own story. I now have *faces* to see in my heart's eye when I hear the news of debates and deportations of people who have lived in our country for decades, brought here as children. When I hear the word “trafficking” I see the courageous woman who shared her story as testimony. I know how this victim of trafficking has rebuilt her life, refusing to be defined by the word victim, finding joy in her husband and children, her garden, her chickens (chickens she laughingly said she sometimes prefers to her husband).

But more than the stories that broke open my heart, are the stories of what I learned from the community organizing to meet the needs *of* the community.

- God has anointed ME to bring the good news...
- You are made in the image and likeness of God.
- How do you want to make your life, the life of your family/children, and community better?
- How can you know yourself? How can you recognize, know and appreciate your gifts and talents? Your limits? How can you seek support and give support to each other?

- How can you then use your gifts and talents for the benefit of yourself, your family and your community?

For almost 40 years, the women in these colonias have grown leadership and transformation of their community organically, like a garden planted and cared for by many hands. In solidarity, they offer direct services to meet the needs of families. They advocate for the systemic changes that directly affect their lives, and the lives of immigrants along the border.

Their borders of the heart expand in ever widening circles of mutual support to meet each new challenge.

“Love God with your whole heart, your whole mind, your whole strength, your whole soul. And love your neighbor as yourself.”

All inhabitants of the globe are now our neighbors. Now more than ever!

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forsaking why and how -
to listen to the invitation,
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How will YOU consecrate your gifts and talents, today, tomorrow, and every day—moment by moment, choice by choice, partnering with God and each other to transform the world?

And so it is. Amen.