

OUR NEXT STEPS, TOGETHER

Sunday August 14, 2016

St. Paul's Cathedral, Kamloops BC

The Dean

You know who I really feel sorry for . . .

Faro, and forecasting in the Yukon . . .

(Jesus) said to the crowds,

‘When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, “It is going to rain”; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, “There will be scorching heat”; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you **not know how to interpret the present time?**

In our current moment, it is difficult to understand or evaluate “what’s going on” and what our next steps should be . . . We walk by faith and not by sight!

George Monbiot, in the Guardian

(Neoliberalism) . . . has played a major role in a remarkable variety of crises: the financial meltdown of 2007–8, the offshoring of wealth and power, of which the Panama Papers offer us merely a glimpse, the slow collapse of public health and education, resurgent child poverty, the epidemic of loneliness, the collapse of ecosystems, the rise of Donald Trump. But we respond to these crises as if they emerge in isolation, apparently unaware that they have all been either catalysed or exacerbated by the same coherent philosophy; a

philosophy that has – or had – a name. What greater power can there be than to operate namelessly?

Salvation Means Creation Healed, Howard A. Snyder

Increasingly the world is thinking ecologically. Science is exploring earth's vast ecology, the complex web of life and matter and its implications for all dimensions of human life and culture. Equally important: today for the first time in history we are witnessing the convergence of ecology and economics on a global scale. Economists Herman Daly and Joshua Farley say prophetically that, "the most pressing problems we face today arise from the interaction between two highly complex systems—the human system and the ecological system that sustains it.

Some personal discoveries . . .

1. The truth emerges from both within and outside the church.
2. If the Gospel is all about truth and truth telling, such truthful awareness comes with costly pain it seems:

'I came to bring fire to the earth, and **how I wish it were already kindled!**

Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided:

Jesus has either gone mad, or Luke is reciting aloud the experience of many in his own community. A shrill voice is in fact, to those

outside power, affirming and comforting. Jesus stands at the turn of an age, a transition which involves conflict.

3. The Gospel challenges the root problem of the world which is satanic domination. It seems this was always so: Isaiah:

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
he expected justice,
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness,
but heard a cry!

Disturbing thing is Jesus' expectation that we all can in fact see the present and future clearly. It is so hard for us to appreciate that next to the dove of peace is the sword of the word.

So . . . back to the weather girl . . . what comes next, and what shall we do?

Dan Hines put a link to a marvellous interview with Deep Ecologist Joanna Macy on FB which I greatly appreciate. She has translated many poems by Rainer Maria Rilke. In a "Sonnet to Orpheus" she reads the following words. Rilke suggests that our task is to be present: to unsettling times; to beauty and love; to all which surrounds us, and inhabits us, and inspires and terrifies us. With Thomas Merton he simply says: Be Present! And I would further suggest, as Christ is present to us.

Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.

Let this darkness be a bell tower
and you the bell. As you ring,

what batters you becomes your strength.

Move back and forth into the change.

What is it like, such intensity of pain?

If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.

In this uncontainable night,

be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,

the meaning discovered there.

And if the world has ceased to hear you,

say to the silent earth: I flow.

To the rushing water, speak: I am.

Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29