

Reflection



Just a week ago, it seems, the landscape was bare and my heart was longing for the new life of spring. Now Earth is robed in color, the forsythia a splash of yellow, and here at the base of the magnolia tree the grey protective sleeves that held the swelling buds have fallen to earth as the blossoms themselves expose their pink petals to the welcoming world.

These discarded scraps remind me of the shrouds of death – the burial cloths of the Living One – left behind in the glorious movement into resurrected life. My thoughts jump to the linking of tomb to womb, of the similarity of the passage of death to the passage of birth. Both are movements of energy from inside outward; both are tremendous mysteries, or two aspects of the same central mystery: the ever-renewing mystery of life.

What is the pathway that can lead us securely at such times? I have just returned from a four-day conference on the “I Am” statements of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John. In each case (“I am the Resurrection and the Life,” “I am the door,” “I am the Bread of Life,” etc.) the Aramaic word for “I” is actually a contraction of two words: “I – I” so immersed as to become one, “Ina – Ina” becoming “Inana” in this spoken language of Jesus. Our speaker interprets for us the meaning of this “I - I” word being the alignment of the small self to the greater Self, the individual self to the One “I” of the Holy One through whom all of creation comes into being. As followers of Jesus, we are encouraged not only to recognize his alignment to the Holy One, but to practice this path of alignment ourselves whenever we find ourselves needing a sure path to follow. The discarded shrouds fall away as the blossoming of new life appears, guided by Divine energy moving through our human form.

Not all human behavior exhibits this type of ever-renewing life. What of the continual toll of wars? What of cruelty toward those who are different? Abuse toward those most closely bound to us in intimacy? We catch ourselves on the verge of impulses aimed toward violent destruction rather than toward healing and the promotion of life. But we can learn. We can turn ourselves around and start again in the practice of atuning our hearts to the Divine heart, of aligning our self to the One Self. Each morning offers the invitation; each evening provides for reflecting and making amends as needed, then letting go into newness as we await the coming of the new day.

May has traditionally been dedicated to Mary on the Catholic calendar. Mary, who opened her own individuality in cooperation with the Divine flow of life, and by so doing served a unique purpose in the unfolding story of life on Earth. May her memory and consciousness support us in our own participation, the ever-renewing Life moving through us, among us and around us in the continuous mystery of Creation.

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