

Friends of Silence

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“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Welcome to the unfolding of a new year! At this turning of the season, we look back with gratitude on the past and peer hopefully into the future. Outside, shortened days and wintry chill seem to suspend time as nature burrows in to wait. Snow has cast its icy aura over barren trees silhouetted against a soundless, white landscape. And yet beneath the ice, the seeds of spring are waiting to be born anew. Perhaps we too need to slow our heart rates, burrow down within our souls, and gather near the warmth and light to discover the timelessness of grace. Let the gift of winter be the practice of being fully present to each sacred moment as we wait to see what will be born anew within our hearts.



They are not long,
These days to be,
But a taste of eternity.
Yet in each day,
In each hour,
There is the power
Of a Now
That stretches timeless
In its core
And knows eternity
Be not more.

~ from FROM THE CENTER by Robert J. Hope



I abandon all that I think I am, all that I hope to be, all that I believe I possess. I let go of the past, I withdraw my grasping hand from the future, and in the great silence of this moment, I alertly rest my soul.

~from DEEP IS THE HUNGER by Howard Thurman

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What a treasure this life is!
Every second belongs to eternity.

~ St. Therese of Lisieux, Collected Letters #96



Make me, O Lord, at last, a simple thing
Time cannot overwhelm.
Once I transcended time
A bud broke to a rose.
And I rose from a last diminishing.

~ from “In Evening Air” (abridged) in THE COLLECTED POEMS OF
THEODORE ROETHKE, as reprinted in AN ALMANAC FOR THE SOUL by
Marv and Nancy Hiles

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For a child, time as the great circus parade of past, present, and future, cause and effect, has scarcely started yet and means little because for a child all time is by and large NOW time and apparently endless. What child, while summer is happening, bothers to think much that summer will end? What child, when snow is on the ground, stops to remember that not long ago the ground was snowless? It is by content rather than its duration that a child knows time, by its quality rather than its quantity – happy and sad times.
 ~from THE SACRED JOURNEY by Frederick Buechner



~from The Family of Man exhibit

I live in unfamiliar places:

The unknowing of empty spaces
 Between what was and what is yet to be.
 It is the hardest earthly place for me
 To dwell within, pause, absolutely still.
 Knowing only God and love can fill
 The wanting, one drop at a time.

In this well ordered universe, the perfect vehicle for our spiritual growth and unfoldment is exactly our present situation. ~Sevakram

It's only through the heart's abiding
 That Wisdom might be found hiding
 In the shadows of such Sacred Pause.
 I offer up what was to mourn in empty spaces,
 Let go of worn embraces
 So what is yet to be
 May somehow birth in me.

As spring and summer follow
 autumn and winter,
 so our lives have their seasons.
 Help us to live in the eternal moment,
 awaiting your perfect timing
 in all things.

~from #105 in PSALMS FOR PRAYING

~Pam Breau in PRESENCE, Vol. 10, No 3



Life may be brimming over with experiences, but somewhere, deep inside, all of us carry a vast and fruitful loneliness wherever we go. And sometimes the most important thing in the whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths, or the turning inward in prayer for five short minutes.
 ~from AN INTERRUPTED LIFE by Etty Hillesum

In our most ordinary days we have moments of happiness, moments of comfort and enjoyment, moments of seeing something that pleased us, something that touched us, moments of contacting the tenderness of our hearts. . . . It's essential during the day . . . to begin to cherish those moments as precious. Gradually we can begin to cherish the preciousness of our whole life just as it is, with its ups and downs, its failures and successes, its roughness and smoothness.

~ Pema Chodron

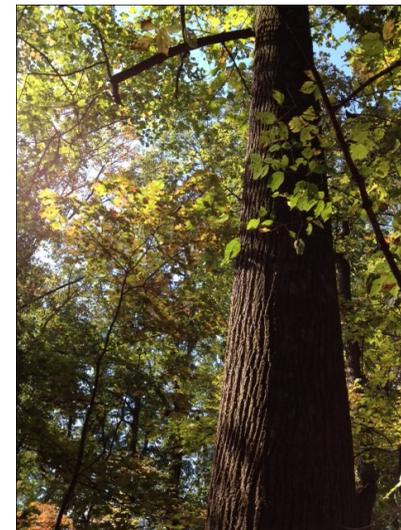
Read not the Times,
 read the Eternities.
 ~Henry David Thoreau

when each day
 is sacred
 when each hour
 is sacred
 when each instant
 is sacred

There has never been a time
 when you and I have not existed...
 There will never be a time
 when we will cease to be...

~from the
 BHAGAVAD
 GITA

earth and you
 space and you
 bearing the sacred
 through time



Follow anything in its act of being – a snowflake falling, ice melting, a loved one waking – and we are ushered into the ongoing moment of the beginning, the quiet instant from which each breath starts. What makes this moment so crucial is that it continually releases the freshness of living. The key to finding this moment and all its freshness, again and again, is slowing down. When we find ourselves stalled in our very serious and ambitious plans, we are often being asked to re-find the beginning of time.
 ~from THE BOOK OF AWAKENING by Mark Nepo

you'll reach
 the fields of light.
 ~Guillevic, Breton

Time is not at all what it seems. It does not flow in only one direction, and the future exists simultaneously with the past. ~Albert Einstein