

2020 11 01 – All Saints Meditation

Readings: by Hafez (13th Century Persian Poet)

Elegance

It is not easy to stop thinking ill of others.
Usually one must enter into a friendship
with a person who has accomplished
that great feat himself.
Then something
might start to rub off on you
of that true elegance.

Once a Young Woman Said to Me

Once a young woman came to Hafiz and said,
"What is the sign of someone knowing God?"
And Hafiz became very quiet, and stood in silence
for nearly a minute... lovingly looking deep into the
young woman's eye, then softly spoke,
"My dear, they have dropped the knife.
The person who knows God has dropped the cruel knife
most so often use upon their tender self – and others."

ONE: We read these texts so that in them we may find wisdom for life.

ALL: May we be open to the Wisdom we understand and hear.

Meditation

In our Opening Prayer, we called into our minds and hearts all those saints who have blessed our lives. Now I'd like to invite you to join me in a guided meditation to connect even more deeply with the real-life saints that surround us.

Before we begin, I invite you to find a comfortable, supported position in your chair or wherever you may be seated. When you are ready, focus your gaze softly on the altar of remembrance and gratitude where you have placed your photos and other objects. If you haven't created an altar, feel free to focus your gaze on any object around you that you associate with comfort and positive feelings. Or if you prefer, you can simply close your eyes.

Now I invite you to bring your inner attention to your body. Notice your feet on the floor, supported by the earth beneath. Notice your bottom, supported by the chair or couch. Then become aware of your breath. You don't need to breathe in any special way. Just notice your in-breath and your out-breath. Follow your breath as it moves in and out of your body.

Then, when you are ready, invite into your mind's eye those saints who have blessed your life – family and friend saints, work saints, community saints, unknown and unnamed saints, those who are still here and those who have passed into the mystery. Recall our readings from the Persian poet, Hafiz, and allow to arise in your mind's eye images of those real-life saints whose true elegance in how they perceive and treat others you might hope to have rub off on you. Those saints who have sometimes succeeded in dropping the cruel knife most so often use upon their tender self – and others. And remember, it's not by perfection that we are sainted, rather it is by our actions. These saints who bless your life and arise in your mind's eye have faced challenges, made mistakes, and hurt – just like the rest of us.

Now I invite you to imagine that one of these saints enters the room you are in and sits down near you or near your altar of remembrance and gratitude. Take a moment to connect with them, looking into their eyes, or leaning into a felt sense of connection. When you are ready, from your heart to theirs, send them loving-kindness and gratitude for all they have been and all they have done.

Now I invite you to pay close attention because this saint has chosen to come to you in this time and this place to share with you a message. There is something they want you to do to contribute to the healing of our world. Maybe it has to do with dropping that cruel knife. Maybe it has something to do with emulating an aspect of their true elegance that you admire. Only they and you know. So take some time in stillness to receive their loving message to you.

Once you have received their message, imagine that they in turn are sending you loving-kindness and gratitude and strength - to support you as you move into action in the world, living into whatever message they have delivered.

Then, when you are ready, say farewell for now to each other. Imagine that this real-life saint rises from their seat and leaves the room. As they depart, know that you carry them with you and with them choose the deeper path of living.

Now return your attention to your breath, and as you ground in your breath, allow space for this experience to land. Anchor it in your heart-mind.

Then, when you are ready, slowly open your eyes if they are closed. Return your gaze to your computer or phone screen, and switch to galleryview (the control is in the top right-hand corner of your computer screen or if you have an iphone or ipad, you can swipe the screen to the side). Now gaze upon the faces of all these real-life saints gathered with you at our service today and know that they too each received a message. Each is going out into the world to contribute to its healing in their own special way. I invite you to send them, from your heart to

theirs, loving-kindness and gratitude and strength for their journey. Now take a moment to fully receive all the lovingkindness and gratitude and strength they have been sending to you.

May we learn to recognize the sainthood in all others and the sainthood in ourselves.

Thank you.

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