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Each of us is of absolute and unparalleled significance

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## *EARTHINES*

*By Diane Pendola*

Faith ~ Hope ~ Love

Spring 2020



In this time of coronavirus, in this time of retreat behind closed doors, perhaps it is an auspicious time to open inner doors. I'm thinking particularly of those doors that help us access the intelligence of our bodies and our hearts, as well as our minds. There are three essential qualities, what some call virtues, that symbolize these deeper wisdoms. They are Faith, Hope and Love.

The following quote, from a poem by David Whyte, knocks at the threshold of Faith and suggests that this intelligence relates not only to our own bodies but to the bodies of each other and to the body of the cosmos herself.

*I want to write about faith,  
about the way the moon rises*

These feel like dark days. And Faith is dark in certain ways: it is dark to our reason, dark to our senses. Faith is a leap into the unknown, and it is a leap that doesn't happen just once in a life-time but each day. Each day is a bow to the unseen, to the not-yet, to what is neither certain nor guaranteed. But times like these bring the realization of our precariousness into focus.

Faith belongs to our awesome human freedom. It belongs to our capacity to say "YES" to the deepest tidal longings of our hearts, even amidst all the storms of "NO, even when all the surfaces of our personal and collective worlds are tossed with formidable waves, and we feel sure we will be overwhelmed by the swelling seas.

Faith is ESSENTIAL, in all the meanings of the word. Faith is a kind of cosmic confidence in Reality, and since we are each an icon of reality, Faith is trust in ourselves, confidence in ourselves. Faith is the capacity to act with courage in the face of uncertainty. And if our times are anything, they are uncertain! But perhaps these are the exact times for us to become a new kind of human, to incarnate within our mind and heart a transformed consciousness, a quality of awareness that the entire planet is calling us, **pleading with us**, to become, and to embody...

....And this requires Hope. Hope is inextricably related to Faith. Like Faith, Hope is also an essential dimension of the Real. My dear friend and teacher, inter-cultural philosopher Raimon Panikkar, often said that "*Hope is not in the future. It is in the invisible.*" In other words, if we cannot tap the wellsprings of our Hope, right now, within the precarious geography of our concrete lives, then our future is stark; our future is impoverished; our future is devoid of imagination.

Faith and Hope in the invisible Source of Life leads from, and to, Love. And in Love we are not alone. Love is relational. Love is experienced in community, the human community, and the whole sacred web of Life. One of my favorite quotes is from the Spanish mystic, ST. John of the Cross: *Where there is no love, put love, and you will find love.* I think this says it ALL. And it is why each of us is of absolute and unparalleled significance! **Because we can put Love where there is no Love.**



Returning to the complete poem from David Whyte:

*I want to write about faith,  
 about the way the moon rises  
 over cold snow, night after night,  
 faithful even as it fades from fullness,  
 slowly becoming that last curving and impossible  
 sliver of light before the final darkness.  
 But I have no faith myself  
 I refuse it even the smallest entry.  
 Let this then, my small poem,  
 like a new moon, slender and barely open,  
 be the first prayer that opens me to faith.\**

Have you no Faith? Pray for it! Ask for it!  
 Throw your urgent voice into the dark Mystery  
 And wait for it!  
 Take a leap beyond the limits of your thought,  
 Beyond who you think you are:  
 Be brave.

Have you no Hope? Dig for it!  
 Don't let the dry winds of cynicism destroy your green lands!  
 If your heart is dry and your land barren  
 Dig for the hidden well,  
 Dig for the Source of Life's eternal springs.

Have you no Love? Reach for it!  
 Open your heart. Turn to the person next to you.

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The whole world waits to give itself to you  
In gift and grace.

Ask for it!  
Dig for it!  
Reach for it!

Remember all else will pass away.  
But Faith, Hope, Love, abide.  
These endure.

And the greatest of them is Love.

Now it is for us to  
Put Love  
Where there is no love.

Now is the time for us  
To BE Love



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