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EARTHLINES
 A Year of Change

Fall~ 2020

2020 is a year of change.

Prison walls—seeming so secure, impenetrable, unchanging—will be dismantled. It is inevitable. Human consciousness keeps them in place. And human consciousness will dissolve them.

As we come into ever deeper realization that only mercy and forgiveness can free a human heart from its chains and a human community from its addictions to punishment and revenge, prison walls will fall—both within and without.



I am an optimist because in this year, 2020, our only alternative is to change. Our Mother, the Earth, has a fever. She is burning. And if we are honest with ourselves, we are cause of her infection. But of course, we are not separate from her, we are not “other.” We are her body, and her illness is our illness, her fever, our own.

This covid virus stops us. These fires terrorize us. These rains and hurricanes flood us with our own precariousness. Slowly we realize that our choices are becoming perilously few: either radically change or perish. As my teacher, Raimon Panikkar was fond of saying, “True freedom consists in not having any choice.”

Quite suddenly our choices are being shrunk down from the surfaces of our lives to our very core.



I am reminded of a story of Jesus, who walks into a self-righteous mob of men who feel totally within their rights to stone a woman to death for committing adultery. He calms the crowd by doing something different than the agitated group. He quietly bends over and writes on the ground. As the crowd settles, he illuminates a truth that they have been denying: “Let the one among you without sin cast the first stone.”

He is asking them to recognize their shared humanity, their shared vulnerability, and they gradually disperse. Then what he asks of the woman is the amazing part of the story. As impossible as it might seem, he actually asks her to walk into a whole new life.

As impossible as it seems, this is what is being asked of us right now.



The consciousness that will melt prison walls, the consciousness that has its source in our freedom and our love, will accompany us.

Shall we begin with forgiving ourselves? Shall we begin with shedding our defenses, our denial and narcissism? Shall we quiet ourselves enough to listen to our higher angels and be illumined by an indwelling light? Shall we ask our Mother what she needs to heal so that we may heal with her? Shall we do it now?

Now is the time we have. Our choice is simple, though as the poet says “costing not less than everything.” But that is what a whole new life demands: everything. Let us begin.



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