



Franciscan Season of Giving

Join us during our end of fiscal year season as we reflect every Tuesday on what is special about this particular Franciscan community. It is our prayer that it may inspire you to see what is sacred in this world, where you belong, and what is yours to do.

Peace and all good,
FSC's Director, Christine



a word from Mark

"I had a moment of clarity, saw the feeling in the heart of things, walked out to the garden crying." - Allen Ginsberg, 1926-1997

The "Age of Reason" is losing steam while Mysticism is rising from Mother Earth and beaming in from the Cosmos. I celebrate this significant movement.

Simply stated, reason and proof and logic and facts and "making sense" are very important. But they're just one way of "knowing", and sometimes after long periods of time those ways of knowing, like infrastructure, break down. And speaking of breaking down. From pre-school through college, I majored in Creative Chaos. (No one knew that I had a significant case of ADHD.) The clowning got me a lot of attention, laughs and popularity. Yes, I got into trouble too, but I shook that off easily. It was part of the show. It also provided an iron breastplate for my tender heart. I didn't cry.

Then, in my 24th year my act broke down as did my love relationship with a hometown girl. My tender heart became vulnerable, and it shattered like a dam bursting from a flood of clogged up emotions. My heart was broken and I lost my mind. I was in a state bordering on psychosis for about three years. (Later in grad school I wrote about mysticism and psychosis.)

After a year of being in that space I moved from Chicago to Bakersfield, California. It was nighttime when I got to California. Dawn must have just been breaking on that first morning. Suddenly I rose in spirit out of my body. I looked down and saw my corpse in bed. Then in spirit, I got into a wrestling match with something like lightning. It was frightening, exciting and exhausting! In a flash I reinhabited my body and immediately bolted upright in bed. I got up, looked out the window and the sun was rising up behind the Tehachapi Mountains. The light was on and in everything! It was exhilarating and soothing! Everything was glowing. It lasted all day through dusk. It was Holy Week and I was seeing "the feeling in the heart of things." And I've been crying and laughing in the garden ever since.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE??? MYSTERY/MYSTICISM DOES NOT MAKE SENSE!!!

So, the next time something mysterious, inexplicable, and mind blowing turns you into a newly livened, babbling fool, don't ask whether or not it makes sense. Maybe just look up and down and all around and ask with all the wonder you can muster, OMG, WHAT NOW?

At the Franciscan Spiritual Center, we come together to share moments "of clarity," and to support each other as we see "the feeling in the heart of things," and laugh and cry, and come to know that we are "the light of the world!" Set free and enveloped in the awesome wholeness of life, we walk "out to the garden crying." The age of the Sacred Heart is here!

May you meet the Mystery with wonder,

Mark Lesniewski

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