

Reflection for August 2011

Blessed are those who plant peace each season ...
repetitive committed action
like a farmer, laboring regularly,
bringing forth fruit ...

for they will become as channels or fountains ...
allowing the nourishment of God's grace
to flow freely ...
hastening the coming of God's new creation.

Matthew 5:9 as rendered from the original Aramaic by
Neil Douglas-Klotz, *Prayers of the Cosmos*.

With 10 years of hindsight connecting us to the terrorist actions of 9/11/2001 and to our subsequent choices, we do well to open our hearts to be taught – still – the ways of true peace-making. In those days and months immediately following the



destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center, with tremendous loss of life, we may have thought we were exhibiting forbearance, plotting our retribution with careful precision and focus, rather than swinging wildly at the "enemy" who had just attacked us. Now, with 10 years of hindsight and the evidence – filling those years – of continued destruction, continued loss of life, we may be more able to critique our response as producing only more carnage, rather than true peace.

Jesus of Nazareth, along with affirming the repetitive, committed work of true peace-makers, reminds us all that violence begets only more violence, that a bad seed cannot produce good fruit. It is the prophets of peace-making like Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., those who have sought to implement Jesus' radical teachings on peacemaking (*Do not return hatred for hatred. If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer them the other cheek as well.*) who have truly impacted the world towards peace and progress.

In the last few days, I have found myself in conversation with two separate friends, each deeply distressed by workplace issues; and I have dialogued at length with another friend pained by difficult family dynamics. The need for peace-making is all around us. May we

support one another to reach deep within for the healthy seeds of goodness, generosity, forgiveness, forbearance – in fact, all of those fruits of the Spirit offered to us thru the mystery of Pentecost. May these good seeds bear rich fruit upon our earth as we continually commit ourselves to the consistent, repetitive work of peace-making. In time, even deserts shall bloom, both globally and locally, by our fidelity to such commitment.

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For further help in deepening your understanding and skills in peace-making, click on the following links:

For resources related to specific issues

http://www.ihmsisters.org/www/Justice_Peace_and_Sustainability/issues.asp

For deepening your peacefulness with the earth itself

http://www.ihmsisters.org/publications/publication_details.asp?NEWS_ID=123