

Holy Mother, Hear Our Prayer...

“Be Comfort-able!”

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 Isaiah 40:1-11

The Thunder Perfect Mind 2:1-19

December 6, 2020

Second Week of Advent

Theme: Holy Mother, Hear My Prayer

The spirit of Advent is one of deep longing...longing for more, for other...for we know deeply...there must be more.

Surely God is not done with creation...or us, yet.

Advent is a time when we step once again into the unknown...in pursuit of more life, a just life...

A life of peace, joy, love, and hope...

A time when we remind ourselves that “opting out” is not a way for a grown-up to live,
a maturing Christian to be! (On Being)

We are growing up in the Advent stories of “just” hope, peace, joy, and love!

In Advent, we give ourselves...perhaps hesitantly at first
but then more fully...give ourselves to Holy possibility.

Drawn toward Holiness, Holiness comes...into humanity ...our humanity...

offering a new perspective on life’s struggles.

Holiness meets us wherever we are in our Advent journey...

in our pain, our loneliness, our hope,
our joy.

Listen:

In the birth of Christ, opposing forces and contradictions, doubt and faith, suffering and compassion, the past and the future, pain and healing are brought together.

God is our all...the alpha and the omega. So...

Holy Mother, hear our prayer. In You, we place our trust.

Help us let go of my usual ways of thinking. Release us from our pain. Safe within your love, hold each hand that we may respond in a new way to the life that surrounds us.

Holy Mother, hear my prayer.
Holy Father, hear my prayer.

Teaching moments about Thunder Perfect Mind:

One of the gospels found in the Nag Hammadi discovery in the 1940’s, “Thunder” was most likely written in the Coptic language giving a different tenor to its English translation.

Unusual is that this is not a story of the faith community or Jesus,
but the voice of Holiness speaking directly to us about God's self.

This voice is of the feminine divine whom also expresses as the masculine divine...embracing both aspects of being in one voice, in one singular presence. Is this not what we moderns call: queer? We reclaim this word as a positive, along with the LGBTQIA+ community.

But this same duality is similarly found in the Jesus we meet in the gospels of John and Matthew, and Paul's First Letter to Corinthians. In these, Jesus is actively associated with the feminine figure of Divine Wisdom while one with the Creator. In this way, Jesus embodies both the Holy Feminine and Holy Masculine. He is the male incarnation of feminine wisdom.

So, "Thunder" brings and holds opposites together in one reality, in a sense, opposites needing and completing each other.

Life is not either/or, but rather...both/and.

Speaking as "Herself" and as "Himself,"

Holiness also speaks to this duality in each of us.

We do not live in a binary world, rather on a "continuum of being" which is beyond role and gender and work and family stereotypes.

Her voice says: Watch Out...be alert to making faulty assumptions and judgements about God, yourself, others.

"Thunder" breaks down the many ways in which the ancient world stereotyped woman as glorious, shameful, corrupt, powerful, and opaque. "Thunder" associates women with the Divine in unexpected ways more real and relative to life's challenges, promises, and ironies, freeing women, and so, then also freeing men held in their own oppressive roles.

It does, along with several of the other recovered gospels, and with those of the traditional New Testament, invite a new look at patriarchal dominance and the understanding of the resurrection of Christ as a communal rather than individual resurrection.

God is within all things, all aspects of life, individual and communal. There is nowhere "Thunder" isn't...with the poor and the rich, the wise and the barbarian, the compassionate and the cruel. Grasping this is the way through...then, shall "all manner of thing be well."

We are invited to see opposites, opposing forces and assumptions, duality, within ourselves and approach our inner dialogue with a more compassionate understanding of our whole self and what may yet be possible.

And when tempted to see or set divides between peoples, be aware: none exists! We only move forward...together. This is our prayer and an affirmation of the love of God for each of us, all of us.

This is ADVENT's hope, peace, joy, love.

Prompting:

Sometimes it seems life is a roller coaster...all highs and lows...while we long for the smooth, straight way through...

or so we think!

And, that voice crying out in the wilderness?

...that should be our voice! Your voice!

Isaiah says "Cry out!" and I say "What shall I cry?"

What would you...are you...crying out about!

Why aren't we shouting out? Are we silent because culture lures into accepting things the way they seem? ...convinces us we don't have the power to make it different? ...because we conditioned to set low expectations silently settling for less?

Silent because we've been lured into living in a regimented world where there is only one right way to do something (usually our way!) rather than a continuum of possibility and wondrous variations?

Rather than crying out, we too often go quiet in situations,
systemic situations.

Why aren't we preparing ourselves to be different if that's what we say we want – for things to be different?

Why aren't we filling the lows with what is missing from life?
Smoothing out the ruts, the routines, clearing out life's hard rocks?
Coming down off that highfalutin, judgmental "take" on things?

If we'd only come down from those mountains on which
we're perched...or up out of the valleys of woe in which we sit...

for even just a minute, and step back, look from a different vantage point on the path...toward a new horizon...

we might see more of what's really going on in and around us.

Changing your line of vision, *the line you're feeding yourself*,
you could fill in those woesome valleys in your life...
but with what would you fill them?

Grounded in new possibilities held within God's strong arm,

Holy Mother holding your hand,
from which pretense or assumption might you be released?

Coming up or going down...what might you discover that would soothe your soul,
smooth your path?

But hey, don't try to smooth things over!

The highs and lows of life...health or family or work challenges, disappointments,
betrayals, pressures of life...

CAN be re-purposed, re-understood, re-imagined straight away so you can see God's
possibility in the situation you face.

Repurposed in a way that allows you to see some good...for your own good, for the
common good.

(Like Karen shared: staying by a loved one's bedside, finding a deeper connection, a
peace in just being alongside, a true sense of gratitude...a straight path formed
through some real lows.)

**We can find comfort. We can offer comfort.
We are comfort-able!**

Comfort-able. As Willie shared...

When we can see all that is "right" in the world,
the valleys fill and the mountains lay low...
steadfast love and faithfulness meet
and peace and justice kiss.

We are comfort-able.

Comfort able is our ability to bring compassion to situations and people...seeing
things in a new light and opening possibilities.

We are other-able.

Other able is our ability to think about ourselves and situations in other ways.

We are able to be other than we have been and we are able
to comfort others as we step back from the way things seem
to get a new perspective on things.

Defying what may appear to be obvious and going with what

may seem contradictory but opens possibility.

Even seeing one thing in life differently...
can change every thing!

We are able to support this new sight line, new path in ourselves and so in others.

From our own new vantage point, we can and do see who we are, they are! All of who we/they are, the continuum of who we all are!

*And in truly seeing them, perhaps then
seeing/discovering more fully "who" we truly are, too!!*

Offering the comfort of your nonjudgmental presence supports someone's freedom to change ...not by fixing but rather by honoring, affirming their humanity. And yours!

You can trust...

when ready and able, they **know** what to do...which path to take.

Isaiah simply encourages us...give comfort.

This is how the world changes, one person at a time...

The wisdom of the Thunder Perfect Mind offers great comfort. There is nowhere God isn't.

No divisions or categories or labels in God's care.

Holy comforting!

Categories and opposing forces, paradoxes, supposed enemies...even within, labels, what seem to be polar opposites are human constructs.

They are not real.

There is instead a continuum of perspective and needs always present.

When we bring the contradictions and perspectives together...allow them to come toward each other, something new, unexpected, beautiful can happen.

i.e. Clapton, Pavarotti, Gospel Choir. i.e. Birth of Christ

This leveling, this continuum of caring and possibility,
this offering of comfort and support
makes "a way" through the wilderness,
makes the path straight!

As we change...come on down or get on up,
embracing the whole of ourselves with love and faith
in what is yet possible,
the unimaginable happens...
justice and peace kiss our lives.

Or maybe that is, when we allow steadfast love and faithfulness to meet in us, we're kissed, changed from the inside out...

*Knowing love without truth is a façade.
And truth without loving kindness brash and boastful and self-serving.*

Think on it:

What might happen if you let love and faithfulness meet in you (meaning each day act out of love consistently rather than conditionally)
and change the usual line you feed yourself...
which often makes you fed up with the way things seem!

What might become clearer to you if you look lovingly at the truth, potentially revealing the lies and toxic assumptions and categories that are just beneath the surface of your life?

For life to be different, you have to let it be different!
To be comforted, you have to be where you can receive comfort.
To be comfort-able is to be present full of compassion and
...this changes you!

Comfort offered comes back to you again and again...as grace.

You have a thunder perfect mind.
Create a new path. There is no where you can't go!

Cry out to Holy Mother, Holy Father!

What calls out for justice in your personal life?

Where is peace needed in your life right now...causing you to perpetually want to scream out?

"There" is your Advent starting place.
You just named it.
And Holy Mother just heard it!

Holy One, You hear my prayer. I lift your name, You're always there.
I feel Your joy running through my soul. All I need is Your hand to hold.
You are here. You are here. You hear my constant call.
You are here. I am here. Holy Mother, You are all.