

Homework

Reflections Initiations by Earth, Class 3: Order vs Chaos

Consider how many of your choices in life are based upon keeping “order” or keeping things “just the same” – allowing you to believe for a day/week/year that you have the power to do that. The Truth is: We have no authority over the dynamic of change and the cycles of life or the greater cycle of human evolution. We are the subjects of these cycles, participants in them. We are not managers, not even on a small level. Chaos is not a warning that something “bad” is happening. Think of it as a fresh wind blowing out the smog.

Opening prayer:

As I look around at the stillness of my garden, I can almost believe that all of life is like this place—silent, orderly, beautiful, with nature determining when each flower will bloom and each tree will bear fruit. Gardens can be seductive that way—offering a resting place away from the chaos that exists just outside the garden walls. How is it possible that this blissful atmosphere ends when I leave my garden? Maybe it’s me. Maybe I am the one who is unable to see the presence of bliss in the chaos of city life and the chaos erupting underneath the soil in my garden as nature awakens the plants come springtime. Nothing is as it seems. Bliss hides in the loudest room and chaos waits to come out even in the silence of a chapel. They are partners, these two forces. They need each other. Order and chaos rely on each other, like the sun and the moon and the day and the night. “Lord I have always preferred the calm waters but then I never have been able to see the turmoil deep in the ocean. Life is a dance of order and chaos, of endings and beginnings, of the new replacing the old. The art of life is to become a dancer, one who can move gracefully within these cycles of life. As painful as many are, still we must continue to move on and through and keep going. I may not always want to dance but grant me the courage to walk. And when I lack the strength to walk, Lord, send me the grace to sit still and look up at the stars with gratitude. Amen.”

Your practice for the week

As you consider order and chaos from a different perspective, ask yourself:

- What rituals do I practice each day to establish order in my life? (Make a list.)
- What equals order in my life?
- What feels like chaos?
- What are some examples of good chaos that have occurred in my life, that have given me the opportunity to pause and “clear the fog”?

Meditation

We are the source of our greatest suffering. We are the generators of most of our chaos. Not God, not others. We are.

- God, help me see chaos and order from a more organic perspective. Help me to see that if something is still, it isn’t necessarily calm, that because something is breaking apart, it is not always broken.

Closing prayer

"Lord, grant me the grace of discernment. For all the many things in life that are difficult, let me become ever more aware of the choices that I make that cause suffering for myself or others. I cannot challenge the forces of nature or the cycles of life. But I can take on my lesser self, little by little. I can reduce the chaos I create in my life through foolish choices or stubbornness or pride. Sometimes I think I would rather do battle with a storm than my own pride, but at least that is one storm I can control. Self-inflicted chaos has brought enough pain into my life and certainly into the lives of others. Grant me the fortitude to change just a little of this part of myself. A little will go a long way. Hover over me, Lord. Send your angels to watch over me, and those I love and all the many I do not know, through the day and during the night. Pour the grace of healing over us while we sleep, Lord. Amen."