

BEAUTY AS SPIRITUAL IMPULSE (Inspired by the reading and sermon on February 2, 2014, by Rev. Carolyn Patierno, "Beauty As Spiritual Impulse")

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

Beauty is before me and beauty is behind me.
Above me and below me hovers the beautiful.
I am surrounded by it. I am immersed in it.
In my youth, I am aware of it and in old age,
I shall walk quietly the beautiful path.
In beauty it is begun. In beauty, it is ended.

~ Navaho

PURPOSE: We come together to build connections and to talk about what deeply matters.

CHECK IN: What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing. What are you leaving behind to be here today?

READING OF GROUP COVENANT

FOCUS: Beauty as Spiritual Impulse

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted; if time remains, general response and conversation are welcome.

"Real beauty is my aim."

"When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands."

~ Mahatmas Gandhi

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is a symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds, the ebb and flow of the tides, the folded bud ready for the spring. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature--the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter. The lasting pleasures of contact with the natural world...are available to anyone who will place himself under the influence of earth, sea and sky and their amazing life."

~ Rachel Carson

"Walk on a rainbow trail; walk on a trail of song, and all about you will be beauty. There is a way out of every dark mist, over a rainbow trail.

~Navajo Song

"Beauty ... comes from the interior. We know it is present because we feel something that transforms us ... Beauty can wake us up to care, to enlarge our world, to feel the pleasure of being alive. It is a place, a tree, a shore, a forest ... Beauty is a smell that invites us to remember some lovely person. Beauty is music that opens our hearts, a child who beckons our smile, a breath of air that calls us to the path we need to follow."

~ Ivonne Gebara

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION: 1) When have you known beauty in your life? 2) Where do you go to experience beauty? 3) Where is beauty at All Souls for you?

CONFIDENTIALITY CHECK: Is there anything that you shared here today that you would like held confidential? Otherwise, this is a reminder that we treat each other's sharing with kindness and respect.

CLOSING WORDS: "And so go from this day and into the next, creating and recognizing the beauty that surrounds us and in which we are immersed. In times of sorrow and in times of joy, bring beauty close as balm and celebration. May it be so."

~ Rev. Carolyn Patierno