

Trinity Devotion 27

Week of February 21st 2021

Fred Young

All those days you felt like dust,
like dirt, as if all you had to do was turn your face
toward the wind and be scattered to the four corners
or swept away by the smallest breath as insubstantial—
Did you not know what the Holy One can do with dust?

This is the day we freely say we are scorched.

This is the hour we are marked by
what has made it through the burning.

This is the moment we ask for the
blessing that lives within the ancient ashes,
that makes its home inside the soil of this sacred earth.

So let us be marked not for sorrow.

And let us be marked not for shame.

Let us be marked not for false humility
or for thinking we are less
than we are but for claiming what

God can do within the dust,
within the dirt, within the stuff of
which the world is made,
and the stars that blaze in our bones,
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge we bear.

—Jan Richardson

Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons

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“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.”

Psalm 51:10

Ash Wednesday, February 17th, opened the liturgical season of Lent. For the next 40 days, Christians around the world will prepare themselves; emotionally, physically and spiritually for the celebration of our highest Holy Day, Easter. Lent is a time of repentance and contemplation. When we are invited to look deep within ourselves to see what God already knows about us.

Those who joined our Wednesday prayer time this week heard this poem by Jan Richardson after receiving the mark of ash. A few lines of the poet's words made me pause. "*Did you not know what the Holy One can do with dust?*" There have been many moments in my life when I have felt like a gust of wind could take me away. And yet, in those moments, I have felt the warmth of an unknown but familiar touch on my face. I'd like to think it is the presence of a loved one, or the Spirit's gentle nudge. On really bad days, there's room enough for both because a lot can be done with dust.

The other line which brings a smile to my face, "*This is the hour we are marked by what has made it through the burning.*" These words serve as a reminder that, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, God remains! No matter who you are or where you are or what is happening on your journey, God remains! Comfort we might need as we discover, like the psalmist suggests, what truly lies within our hearts.

Happy Lenten journey!



Things to Consider:

1. What speaks to you in the poem?
2. What is the smudge you bear this day?

PRAYER: Forgiving and life giving God, wash our hearts and give us the courage needed to share our love with others. Amen.