

April 10, 2020

Life's Refrain

Love is reckless; not reason.

Reason seeks a profit.

Love comes on strong, consuming herself, unabashed.

Yet in the midst of suffering

Love proceeds like a millstone,

hard-surfaced and straight-forward.

Having died to self-interest,

she risks everything and asks for nothing.

Love gambles away every gift God bestows.

These words were written by the Sufi mystic Rumi (quoted by Kabir Helminski in *Living Presence*, p. 142). I think Rumi describes the journey of Jesus on this Good Friday. Jesus submits to dying at the hands of the emperor so that we could see from a different perspective. Jesus invites us to die to self, but his idea of dying to self was not through making himself smaller or diminished but through radically squandering everything he had and was.

We think of dying to self as being less self-centered—and maybe that is true—but what if we thought about it in the positive, as sharing ourselves extravagantly? What if we thought about it as expanding our love and generosity, risking everything and asking for nothing?

Folk singer Carrie Newcomer has a song titled “Leaves Don’t Drop,” where she sings, “Leaves don’t drop; they just let go and make a place for seeds to grow.” It is about intentionally choosing to make way for new life. The song continues: “A seed is what a tree contains, to die to live is life’s refrain.”

Where do we need to let go so new growth can happen? What needs to die, what needs to be risked for us to live the resurrected life?

Blessings on this Good Friday!

Paula