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Rebellion as Sacred Work

Recently, a Plymouth couple turned me on to the writing of Mary Doria Russell. In her novel *Children of God* (a sequel to *The Sparrow*), Russell continues the journey of interplanetary missionaries and their misunderstandings between cultures and people. It's very provocative writing. I have been thinking a great deal about this quote at the end of the book:

If we are all children of God, then we can become one family over time. It's very subversive, that idea—it undermines hierarchies, erodes aristocracies. It makes the discontent of the powerless and the rebellion of the disenfranchised sacred, because it implies that each soul is sovereign and of value. And it challenges its believers to build a world where the inequities of the past are less glaring and brutal. It doesn't matter if God is real or not—once the idea exists, it can change history.

I have never thought that if we are to really understand that all people are children of God, part of one family, it's subversive. Transformative maybe, but subversive? But the more I thought about it, the more sense it made considering our current reality. Many of us are trying to build a world where the pyramid of the hierarchy is replaced with the circle of shared leadership, where aristocracies and oligarchies are replaced by true democracy. The implication that the rebellion of the disenfranchised is sacred work can be terrifying. True change often takes just that—tea thrown in the harbor, salt marches in India, bus boycotts in the South, and recent marches around the world demanding racial equality—rebellious behavior.

This sacred work starts with actions that reflect an understanding that each soul is sovereign and of value. How about we just start with that?

Blessings,

Paula