

An Eastertide COVID Reflection

I'm feeling quite unmoored these days. My rhythms are gone, routines lost, replaced with a list of activities that is hard to rank-order in terms of importance. Clean the toilets, work on multiplication tables, make dinner, bathe the pup. Which one to do first? Probably the toilets. Wait - there's a little boy here who needs to learn how to clean the toilets! Let's get him! And while we're on the subject, he's capable of pushing a vacuum. Can he make a sandwich yet? Oh god, I can't let him grow up into one of those insufferable men who convince the women in his life to do his domestic work because he was too lazy or too coddled to learn it himself! COVID quarantine! The perfect time for feminism!

Wait...was I doing toilets or bathing the pup? Is it time for dinner yet? What day is it again?

See what I mean. Unmoored.

And I have it a lot better than most. I still have the regular routine of leaving the house to go to work every day. Granted, work is a lot different now than it was a month ago. Only phone calls with our clients. Get the dogs and cats without touching the owners. Don't get in their cars for gosh sakes! Do we have enough masks? Be sure to send the thank you notes out to our seamstresses (Sharon Sanborn!)- Wash the cloth gowns and caps. Keep those gloves on all day - try not to use more than a couple of pairs each day. Is everyone healthy? Anyone call in sick today? Quick, check the bank accounts...we still have enough for payroll. Any word on that paycheck protection program loan? The animals are here! This one has a severe infection and needs surgery right away. Those two over there just ate rat poison. That one got bit at the dog park. Who's still going to the dog park? There's more diarrhea and vomitus and blood than we can keep up with some days.

So, I get the blessing, and it is a blessing, of leaving the house most days. But I suspect that my work life is no less altered than everyone else's.

Unmoored. I feel unmoored. I feel it, but when I check in with the deeper core, I realize that my feelings are lying to me. The chaos and eerie quiet and the uncertainty and the worry are all threatening to undo something central and fundamental that I have worked on crafting long before COVID.

When I walked away from the Christianity I was brought up in, I nevertheless held to a core belief that any sort of theism had to bring some level of help and healing to humanity. I doubted, maybe still doubt, in ultimate salvation, but I believe in temporal, situational, relational healing, restoration, recoveries, progress. The whole point of it all is to offer whatever help is ours to offer. Nothing more. Nothing less.

I create meaning from the building blocks that still feel relevant to me. I find comfort in liturgy, in ritual not so much for the meanings given from those rites and rituals, but because they allow me to participate in generations of meaning-making with people, just people, past, present, and future.

I create order out of uncertainty. I provide instruction and advice and guidance to my employees, my clients, my son. I use my experience and intuition to create a path for others and in doing so, I'm creating my own roadways of meaning and purpose.

am strong, physically yes, but I also have emotional and spiritual strength created from years of holding hands, offering tissues, wrapping dearly beloved bodies for burial, suturing wounds, reassuring the worried, all done without the benefit of leisure time to think and prepare. I know how to be present for someone else's pain. And being present has made me strong.

I am joyful. I am kind. I am a thoughtful listener. I am demanding. I am precise. I try to say yes as often as I can. I say no when I have to.

I know who I am.

So, I'm not truly unmoored by all of this disruption. I'm not unmoored, and, more importantly, neither are you.

Remember those little rituals that used to give your days order, structure. Do you remember the meaning those rituals gave you? Do you remember the meanings you gave them?

Recount, for a moment, who you are, what meaning and purpose you are giving to the world. You are not alone. You are not erased. You are not weak or neutered by fear and worry. You are strong because you are loved. You are compassionate because you are spiritually open and welcoming. You are brave because others have been brave with you.

We, as members of a community celebrating Easter and Eastertide, we are liturgical meaning-makers. We are not truly unmoored when life moves to a different rhythm than we've ever lived before. We are not broken because we lose health and security and life. We continue loving and sharing and creating community together because that is who we are called to be, regardless of our circumstances. We do this faithfully because that is who we are. We do this because we cannot live another way. I cannot live another way. I cannot.

My hope for you all this week is that you are able to push aside anxiety and sadness and give a moment or two to remember the fierce, loving warrior that you are and to exult in the greatness that is you! We will need all of our collective glory in the days to come.

Love to you all!

Kristy