

LCWR PRE-ASSEMBLY, AUGUST 13, 2013
A NEW CRITICAL JUNCTURE
Follow-up Reflection Material from NRRO

Reflection on the Stories of Sarah & Abraham, Simeon & Anna

1. Do I consider the responses in both of these scripture stories to be acceptable responses?
2. What do these stories say to me about fidelity to call? Do I look upon one or the other as being “more faithful?” More blessed by God?
3. What do these stories say to me about my response to my own aging? To our communal aging?
4. What do these stories say to me about planning for the future of my community and the future of religious life?



From *Active Hope, How to Face the Mess We're In without Going Crazy*, by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone

When these issues come up in conversation, they are often met by awkward silences. Two different views commonly block the flow of words. The first dismisses the problem as overblown. . . The second perspective . . . sees continued decline as so inevitable as to render it not worth talking about. . . These things have already happened. But we can learn from them and make choices about where we go from here. *Page 25*

When we face the mess we are in, we *know* the future is uncertain. That is an unavoidable feature of our times. But what we do with this uncertainty is a matter of choice . . . If we take action only when we are reasonably sure of success, uncertainty can be paralyzing . . . When we fall in love or start out in a career, can we be certain it will work out well? . . . Life, in its richness and mystery, never offers guarantees of success. We don't let that stop us. Indeed, our awareness that the outcome is uncertain is what prompts us to prepare; it calls us to attention. *Pages 229-30*



Leaning Into Letting Go, from *Journey of the Soul*, by Doris Klein, CSA, p. 43

We ask to believe that we can face this time or circumstance and have what we need to be faithful. Mostly our prayer of leaning into letting go is a deep breath that simply allows us to acknowledge that we have no answers. We watch and wait and simply ask to know that we are loved.

From *Rest Stops for the Soul*, by Joe Nassal, CPPS, p. 20-21

“When you come to a fork in the road, take it.” Yogi Berra

Sometimes, instead of traveling one path or the other, we just stand there and our pilgrim’s progress is stopped by indecision. . . . We accept ourselves for who we are—fragile and fearful and fraught with missing pieces—and through the grace of God we are given a vision of what the whole puzzle looks like.



Giving Up and Letting Go, from *Hard Choices for Loving People*, by Hank Dunn, p. 72

Giving up implies a struggle—

Letting go implies a partnership

Giving up dreads the future—

Letting go looks forward to the future

Giving up lives out of fear—

Letting go lives out of grace and trust

Giving up is a defeat--

Letting go is a victory

Giving up is unwillingly yielding control to forces beyond myself—

Letting go is choosing to yield to forces beyond myself

Giving up believes that God is to be feared—

Letting go trusts in God to care for me.



From *Radical Optimism*, by Beatrice Bruteau, p. 6-7

We need to find our way back to the very basic realities, truths, values. Contemplation is the road by which we may do this. We need to find the roots of our being: we need to be radical. And we need to do so in hope, even strong hope, for our condition is perilous. We will not have the will and the energy and the earnestness and the perseverance and the courage to engage the present crisis unless we believe that we can preserve our lives and our values. We need to believe that we can come into an arrangement whereby persons can manage freely to have voice in the conditions of their own lives. And that they can do it without infringing the parallel rights of other persons. We must want the well-being of all and of each in that all. Seeing such a vision and believing that it can be attained and committing ourselves to working toward it is what I mean by optimism—optimism that is rooted in deep reality and working out in love by skillful means.