

SPMM Adult First Day School February 13, 2022

Wholeness

Spare me perfection. Give me instead the wholeness that comes from embracing the full reality of who I am, just as I am.

~ David Benner, in *Human Being and Becoming*

The great wisdom traditions are trying to teach us that grief isn't something from which to run. It's a liminal space, a time of transformation. In fact, we can't risk getting rid of the pain until we've learned what it has to teach us and it, or we cannot be whole. Grief, suffering, loss, pain...*always* has something to teach us!

~ Richard Rohr

A midrash tells us that 'when the world was created God made everything a little bit incomplete. Rather than making bread grow right out of the earth, God made wheat grow so that we might bake it into bread. In this way we could become partners in completing the work of creation'. Recognition. Repetition. Reverence. Receiving. These are ways we grow to know that we ourselves are integral parts of the whole. We, too, are manna.

~ Gunilla Norris, in *Becoming Bread*

I used to keep my spiritual life in a tight space and felt that my work, my social life, my relational joys and struggles were separate. Now I see all of this differently. I have come to believe that every part of my life affects or influences my life with the Holy. I try now to approach each person, event, creature, with two questions: How are you my teacher? What am I meant to learn?

~ Joyce Rupp, in *The Cup of Our Life*

It is essential for us to welcome our grief, whatever form it takes. When we do, we open ourselves to our shared experiences in life. Grief is our common bond. Opening to our sorrow connects us with everyone, everywhere. There is no gesture of kindness that is wasted, no offering of compassion that is useless. Small gestures create the whole. We can be generous to every sorrow we see. It is sacred work.

~ Francis Weller, in *The Wild Edge of Sorrow*

Consider:

What does spiritual wholeness mean to you?

When do you feel most whole? Least whole?

Which of these quotes draws you, and why?