

January 28, 2010

- *Finding peace/balance in times of suffering*
- *Haiti earthquake response*

God, Who creates all, Who transforms all, Who loves all, surrounds each of you with light, with strength and with peace.

There is so much need for peace among you, among everyone, that we wish to devote these moments with you to the subject of peace. In particular, we are not addressing political peace but rather personal peace.

At times in your personal and global lives, you are so attuned to the seemingly limitless needs of so many, and at times, to the seemingly limitless needs of yourselves. Life is not smooth, and although God, the Spirit Center of all, creates all, it is not intended that God, in this process of creation, also eliminates all. The presence of God is a kind of knowing God, a loving God, a nonjudgmental God, but God does not see the infinite value of humankind being bereft of need. Every individual, every plant, every organism, every bit of matter—no matter how large or small—has needs, but what are truly needs? What is it about that which exists that contains need?

Above all, there is the natural need for balance. You seek balance in your own lives. You seek balance in health, in emotions, in demands. You seek balance in justice. You seek balance in comfort. You seek balance in relationships. But even the stones seek balance, for stones as individuals are, in fact, not what they appear to be. Just as individuals are made up of molecules, atoms, subatomic particles, so are the stones. You are created with much space within, as is a simple stone. This space that is common to all of creation seeks balance in its own way.

Another word for balance is peace. When there is balance in your own lives, you can feel peace. When there is imbalance, you cannot fully achieve what it is that you seek identified as peace. You seek peace emotionally, but what is that? It is a balance. You seek peace, but that is a balance. You seek peace politically—that is a balance. So when we speak of peace, we refer to this central, common balance that is indeed a part of all that has been created.

But our concerns at this moment are for the issues contributing to peace as you experience it personally. Illness is really a condition of imbalance, as you know. The body's natural state is to seek balance, to seek a kind of equilibrium. You are never entirely well; you are never entirely ill. The body is constantly in change. The emotions are never constantly, totally positive; likewise they are never constantly and totally negative. There are times when your life is filled with what brings joy, and there are times in your lives when you are filled with what brings anxiety, pain, regret, sadness. But a life that is characterized as peaceful is a life that recognizes the place of all that is experienced in the ultimate development of spirit. That development of spirit enhances and provides context for human experience.

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When you experiences illness, it is important to acknowledge what is healthy. When you experience great sadness, it is important to acknowledge what brings joy. When you feel threatened, it is essential to acknowledge all that brings comfort. You can be in pain, and yet be in comfort. You can be filled with anxiety, and yet surrounded by love. Your lives can seem relatively smooth, and yet you are still aware of great suffering elsewhere. A truly meaningful human life is a life characterized by an awareness of the presence of all that brings comfort and all that brings pain or discomfort.

A life that is in balance does not imply a life without challenges. If you are challenged, you must also acknowledge your strengths, and if you are successful you must always acknowledge the challenges that you face. In recognizing one in the presence of another, the balance that results leads to peace. When you are frustrated, when you are fearful, when you are filled with anxiety, you lose your awareness of what gives you strength, of what part of your life is filled with positive energy. Peace is a state of awareness; it is not a condition of complacency. In the midst of great turmoil, surrounded by suffering, you can still be at peace. You do not ignore what surrounds you to acknowledge its place.

The great suffering in Haiti brings pain not only to those who have lost all, but also brings compassion, the strength of loving concern, from countless others. That compassion, that reaching out, is collectively more powerful than the suffering that is being endured and the losses experienced. Ultimately, because of the presence of God, the truth is that positive energy is always more potent than anything that is negative. The desire to reach out to those in need is an energy far greater than any negative presence could provide.

Love is more powerful than hate. Joy is more powerful than sadness. Compassion is more powerful than jealousy. All that you do, in service to others, collectively throughout human life, is far greater than all the suffering of humans around the world. It is not a negation of the suffering, but an affirmation of compassionate love. When you provide help to another, the power of that help exceeds the negative energy of suffering, and what happens? It is the suffering that is ultimately alleviated. It is not the power of love that is diminished by the suffering. Light overcomes darkness; darkness never overcomes light. Peace is an acknowledgment of darkness and an affirmation of the indomitable strength of light. It is the light, it is the love, it is the lack of judgment toward others that wins the day, and it is precisely that energy that is a reflection of that very Creator of all.

When you experience sadness, think upon what brings joy. When you experience suffering, consider what creates beauty. When you see darkness, find the source of light and allow it to enter your lives. The darkness that you see will be illuminated. The light can never be extinguished.

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You must seek peace. It is the natural state of all. The balance that exists is a balance that must exist. Live your lives in search of this balance. Live your lives aware of all challenges, but at the same time aware of the Source of light. It's the peace that you seek which you will then confront, and you will be buoyed by the light, and the darkness will fall away.

Do not ignore what it is in life that you characterize as negative energy, but rather use those moments to look up, to seek, to pursue, and to believe. Faith is a seeking and believing in Light. Faith is an acknowledgment of the reality of peace, and an acknowledgment of your capacity to find peace when surrounded by all that you may fear, by all that creates anger, by all that creates anxiety. Live your lives in faith, in the acknowledgment that the peace you seek is present, the peace you seek is now, the peace you seek is where you are.

We say so frequently that you are in your lives where you must be. That is because where you are provides for the peace for which you pray. Peace is not over the hill, around the corner, tomorrow, yesterday. Peace is here! Peace is now! Rejoice in the peace!

Amen.