

"It is with
the Heart that one sees Rightly;
What is essential is Invisible
to the Eyes."
- Antoine De Saint-Exupery

SOULFOOD
reflective moments

Sacred Heart



The Baha'i Faith celebrates the unity and diversity of the human family,
the essential harmony of all religions and the oneness of the Universal Creator.

Proudly presented by the Baha'i community of Adelaide

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Celebrating International Women's Day (March 8th)

Opening Music

LOVE IS THE KEY

O Friend

In the garden of thy heart plant naught but the rose of love, and from the nightingale of affection and desire loosen not thy hold. Treasure the companionship of the righteous and eschew all fellowship with the ungodly.

O Son of Justice

Whither can a lover go but to the land of his beloved? And what seeker findeth rest away from his heart's desire? To the true lover reunion is life, and separation is death. His breast is void of patience and his heart hath no peace. A myriad lives he would forsake to hasten to the abode of his beloved.

O Son of Being

Thy heart is my home, sanctify it for my descent. Thy spirit is my place of revelation; cleanse it for My descent.

~ Baha'u'llah, from the Baha'i Writings

Even though I speak in human and angelic language - but I have no love - I am as noisy and brass as a clashing cymbal. And although I have the prophetic gift and see through every secret and through all that may be known, and have sufficient faith for the removal of mountains - but I have no love - I am nothing. And though I give all my belongings to feed the hungry and surrender my body to be burned - but I have no love - I am not in the least benefited.

Love endures long and is kind. Love is not jealous. Love is not out for display. It is not conceited or unmannerly. It is neither self-seeking, nor irritable, nor does it take account of a wrong that is suffered. It takes no pleasure in injustice but sides happily with truth. It bears everything in silence, has unquenchable faith, hopes under all circumstances; endures without limit. Love never fails. As for prophesying, they will pass away. As for tongues, they will cease. As for knowledge, it will lose its meaning. For our knowledge is fragmentary and so is our prophesying. But when the perfect is come then the fragmentary will come to an end.

When I was a child I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. But on becoming a man I was through with childish ways. For now we see indistinctly in a mirror, but then face to face. Now we know partly, but then we shall understand as completely as we are understood.

There remain then, faith, hope, love. These three; but the greatest of these is love.

~ The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, from the Bible

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come:
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

~ William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Sonnet CXV

All through eternity
Beauty unveils His exquisite form
in the solitude of nothingness;
He holds a mirror to His Face
and beholds His own beauty.
he is the knower and the known,
the seer and the seen;
No eye but His own
has ever looked upon this Universe.

His every quality finds an expression:
Eternity becomes the verdant field of Time and Space;
Love, the life-giving garden of this world.
Every branch and leaf and fruit
Reveals an aspect of His perfection-
The cypress give hint of His majesty,
The rose gives tidings of His beauty.

Whenever Beauty looks,
Love is also there;
Whenever beauty shows a rosy cheek
Love lights Her fire from that flame.
When beauty dwells in the dark folds of night
Love comes and finds a heart
entangled in tresses.
Beauty and Love are as body and soul.
Beauty is the mine, Love is the diamond.

They have together
since the beginning of time-
Side by side, step by step.

~ Rumi

Musical reflection

FOUR KINDS OF LOVE

There are four kinds of love. The first is the love that flows from God to man; it consists of the inexhaustible graces, the Divine effulgence and heavenly illumination. Through this love the world of being receives life. Through this love man is endowed with physical existence, until, through the breath of the Holy Spirit—this same love—he receives eternal life and becomes the image of the Living God. This love is the origin of all the love in the world of creation.

The second is the love that flows from man to God. This is faith, attraction to the Divine, enkindlement, progress, entrance into the Kingdom of God, receiving the Bounties of God, illumination with the lights of the Kingdom. This love is the origin of all philanthropy; this love causes the hearts of men to reflect the rays of the Sun of Reality.

The third is the love of God towards the Self or Identity of God. This is the transfiguration of His Beauty, the reflection of Himself in the mirror of His Creation. This is the reality of love, the Ancient Love, the Eternal Love. Through one ray of this Love all other love exists.

The fourth is the love of man for man. The love which exists between the hearts of believers is prompted by the ideal of the unity of spirits. This love is attained through the knowledge of God, so that men see the Divine Love reflected in the heart. Each sees in the other the Beauty of God reflected in the soul, and finding this point of similarity, they are attracted to one another in love. This love will make all men the waves of one sea, this love will make them all the stars of one heaven and the fruits of one tree. This love will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of real unity.

~ 'Abdu'l-Baha from the *Baha'i Writings*

SPIRITUAL LOVE

Confucianism

To Love all men is the greatest benevolence.

Buddhism

Let a man cultivate towards the whole world a heart of love.

Hinduism

One can best worship the Lord through love.

Zoroastrianism

Man is the beloved of the Lord and should love Him in return.

Taoism

Heaven arms with love those it would not see destroyed.

Sikhism

God will regenerate those in whose hearts there is love.

Christian

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

Judaism

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbour as thyself.

Islam

Love is this, that thou shouldst account thyself very little and God very great.

Baha'i

Love Me that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not My love can in no wise reach thee.

Musical reflection

THE WINGS OF ONE BIRD

In this day man must investigate reality impartially and without prejudice in order to reach true knowledge and conclusions. What, then, constitutes the inequality between man and woman? Both are human. In powers and function each is the complement of the other. At most it is this: that woman has been denied the opportunities which man has so long enjoyed, especially the privilege of education....

The truth is that all mankind are the creatures and servants of one God, and in His estimate all are human. Man is a generic term applying to all humanity. The biblical statement "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" does not mean that woman was not created. The image and likeness of God apply to her as well... To accept and observe a distinction which God has not intended in creation is ignorance and superstition....

It is my hope that the banner of equality may be raised throughout the five continents where as yet it is not fully recognized and established. In this enlightened world of the West woman has advanced an immeasurable degree beyond the women of the Orient. And let it be known once more that until woman and man recognize and realize equality, social and political progress here or anywhere will not be possible. For the world of humanity consists of two parts or members: one is woman; the other is man. Until these two members are equal in strength, the oneness of humanity cannot be established, and the happiness and felicity of mankind will not be a reality...

The world of humanity has two wings - one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be.

~ *Abdu'l-Baha, from the Baha'i writings*

I've got the children to tend
The clothes to mend
The floor to mop
The food to shop
Then the chicken to fry
The baby to dry
I got company to feed
The garden to weed
I've got shirts to press
The tots to dress
The cane to be cut
I gotta clean up this hut
Then see about the sick
And the cotton to pick.

Shine on me, sunshine
Rain on me, rain
Fall softly, dewdrops
And cool my brow again.

Storm, blow me from here
With your fiercest wind
Let me float across the sky
'Til I can rest again.

Fall gently, snowflakes
Cover me with white
Cold icy kisses and
Let me rest tonight.

Sun, rain, curving sky
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone
Star shine, moon glow
You're all that I can call my own.

~ Maya Angelou

It would be ridiculous to talk of male and female atmospheres, male and female springs or rains, male and female sunshine.... how much more ridiculous is it in relation to mind, to soul, to thought, where there is as undeniably no such thing as sex, to talk of male and female education and of male and female schools.

~ Susan B. Anthony (1820 – 1906)

Spread love everywhere you go: first of all in your own house ... Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting
~ Mother Teresa

A REFLECTION BY ROBERT FULGHAM

There is a person who has profoundly disturbed my peace of mind for a long time. She doesn't even know me, but she continually goes around minding my business. We have very little in common. She is an old woman, an Albanian... She is a Roman Catholic nun who lives in poverty in India. I disagree with her on fundamental issues of birth control, the place of women in the world and in the church, and I am turned off by her naïve statements about "what God wants." She stands at the centre of great contradictory notions and strong forces that shape human destiny. She drives me crazy. I get upset every time I hear her name or read her words or see her face. I don't even want to talk about her.

In the studio where I work, there is a wash basin. Above the wash basin is a mirror. I stop at this place and look myself in the mirror. Alongside the mirror is a photograph of this troublesome woman. Each time I look in the mirror at myself, I also look at her face. In it I have seen more than I can tell; and from what I see, I understand more than I can say

The photograph was taken in Oslo, Norway, on the 10th of December, in 1980. This is what happened there:

A small, stooped woman in a faded blue sari and worn sandals received an award. From the hand of a King. An award funded from the will of an inventor of dynamite. In a glittering hall of velvet and gold and crystal. Surrounded by the noble and famous in formal black and in elegant gowns. The rich, the powerful, the brilliant, the talented of the world in attendance. And at the centre of it all a little old lady in sari and sandals. Mother Teresa, of India. Servant of the poor and sick and dying. To her, the Nobel Peace Prize.

No Shah or president or king or general or scientist or pope; no banker or merchant or cartel or oil company or ayatollah holds the key to as much power as she has. None is as rich. For hers is the invincible weapon against the evils of this earth; the caring heart. And hers are the everlasting riches of this life: the wealth of the compassionate spirit.

To cut through the smog of cynicism, to take only the tool of uncompromising love; to make manifest the capacity for healing humanity's wounds; to make the story of the Good Samaritan a living reality; and to live so true a life as to shine out from the back streets of Calcutta takes courage and faith we cannot admit ourselves and cannot be without.

I do not speak her language. Yet the eloquence of her life speaks to me. And I am chastised and blessed at the same time. I do not believe one person can do much in this world. Yet there she stood, in Oslo, affecting the world around. I do not believe in her version of God. But the power of her faith shames me. And I believe in Mother Teresa.

~ Robert Fulgham

Musical reflection

PATH OF DISTINCTION

Coretta Scott King, who worked to keep her husband's dream alive with a chin-held-high grace and serenity that made her a powerful symbol of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s creed of brotherhood and nonviolence, died Tuesday, January 31st, 2006. She was 78.

Coretta Scott King was a supportive lieutenant to her husband, Martin Luther King Jr. during the most dangerous and tumultuous days of the civil rights movement, and after his assassination in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968, she carried on his work while also raising their four children.

"I'm more determined than ever that my husband's dream will become a reality," the young widow said soon after his slaying.

She pushed and goaded politicians for more than a decade to have her husband's birthday observed as a national holiday, achieving success in 1986. In 1969 she founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta and used it to confront hunger, unemployment, voting rights and racism.

Over the years, King was with her husband in his finest hours. She was at his side as he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. She marched beside him from Selma, Alabama, into Montgomery in 1965 on the triumphant drive for a voting rights law. In 1993, on the 25th anniversary of her husband's death, King said the war in Vietnam that her husband opposed "has been replaced by an undeclared war on our central cities, a war being fought by gangs with guns for drugs."

"The value of life in our cities has become as cheap as the price of a gun," she said. In London, she stood in 1969 in the same carved pulpit in St. Paul's Cathedral where her husband preached five years earlier.

"Many despair at all the evil and unrest and disorder in the world today," she preached, "but I see a new social order and I see the dawn of a new day."

~ Erin Haines, *Associated Press*

..The more we desire to benefit others, the greater the strength and confidence we develop and the greater the peace and happiness we experience. If this still seems unlikely, it is worth asking ourselves how else we are to do so. With violence and aggression? Of course not. With money? Perhaps up to a point, but no further.

But with love, by sharing with others' suffering, by recognizing ourselves in all others—especially those who are disadvantaged and those whose rights are not respected—by helping them to be happy: yes. Through love, through kindness, through compassion we establish understanding between ourselves and others. This is how we forge unity and harmony.

Compassion and love are not mere luxuries. As the Source both of inner and external peace, they are fundamental to the continual survival of our species.

~ *The Dalai Lama*

So far as ye are able, ignite a candle of love in every meeting, and with tenderness rejoice and cheer ye every heart. Care for the stranger as for one of your own; show to alien souls the same loving kindness ye bestow upon your faithful friends.

Should any come to blows with you, seek to be friends with him; should any stab you to the heart, be ye a healing salve unto his sores; should any taunt and mock at you, meet him with love. Should any heap his blame upon you, praise ye him; should he offer you a deadly poison, give him the choicest honey in exchange; and should he threaten your life, grant him a remedy that will heal him evermore. Should he be pain itself, be ye his medicine; should he be thorns, be ye his roses and sweet herbs.

Perchance such ways and words from you will make this darksome world turn bright at last; will make this dusty earth turn heavenly, this devilish prison place become a royal palace of the Lord – so that war and strife will pass and be no more, and love and trust will pitch their tents on the summits of the world. Such is the essence of God's admonitions; such in sum are the teachings for the Dispensation of Bahá.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *From the Bahá'í Writings*

Musical finale

thank you for attending

SOULFOOD
reflective moments

please join us for the next Soul Food program

Sunday, March 16th, 2008

Healing
RESTORE THE BALANCE