

Weekly Meditation April 21, 2010
By Rev. Teri Lubbers

Kneel and Kiss the Ground

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened. Don't open the door to the study and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument. Let the beauty we love be what we do. There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

~The Essential Rumi, translated by Coleman Barks.

I am beginning to think that many of the routines that give shape to my day are actually my antidotes to emptiness and fear. I know that I am a creature of habit and routine. For example, I eat the same thing every morning for breakfast: oatmeal with oat bran, dried cranberries, cinnamon and soy milk. Every morning! It's good for me. I like it. Structure isn't a bad thing; too much chaos will tear our lives apart. But I sometimes have a nagging suspicion that perhaps I create rituals and routines to protect myself from the unknown, to ward off the unexpected, to seal off any access whereby the uninvited might find me and change me and interject a note of uncertainty into my tightly-sewn-up life. I am embarrassed to admit that the uninvited sometimes includes Spirit.

Rumi says resist the temptation to do what we always do, to pick up a book for answers (or turn on the television or iPod for distraction). Resist the inclination to fill up the emptiness with something, especially something that reinforces ideas you already have. Instead, take down a musical instrument (or a paintbrush or a lump of clay)...something which offers the potential for creativity, an opportunity that Spirit might use to birth some new melody in you.

I still start most mornings by reading something. But sometimes I play my flute. I once had a professor for a class on prayer who required that I find a way to pray that didn't involve words... I chose the flute (others chose things like cooking, or gardening or walking). It is a way that I have learned to "kneel and kiss the ground." Rumi says there are hundreds of ways... What are you choosing?

Prayer: God, let the beauty I love be what I do. Help me remember to kneel and kiss the ground, surrendering to gratitude and the moving of your Spirit. Instead of always trying to fill the emptiness that is in me, let it be the path into your garden. Amen.