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A Candle in the Window

Peter Millar

Words to encourage us in tough times.

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**The God of ancient calm:**

God of azure sky, and broad horizon, of sandy creek and shady gum,  
God of weathered, broody, silent ranges, of quiet, evening billabong.  
God of searing heat and dry dust bowls, of lightning strike and raging fire,  
God of fearful, howling tearing cyclone, of swirling, muddy, inland flood.  
God of ancient calm let your peace still us,  
God of fearful storm fill us with awe,  
God of lonely plains touch the empty spaces within us,  
Where we are vulnerable enough to meet You.

Adapted from a prayer used in the Uniting Church of Australia.

**The tree-frog croaks:**

*The tree-frog croaks his far-off song, his voice is stillness, moss and rain  
drunk from the forest ages long.*

*We cannot understand that call unless we move into his dream,  
where all is one and one is all.*      The Australian poet Judith Wright.

**The hidden consciousness:**

Rivers and mountains have a dual nature. A river is but a form of water, yet it has a distinct body. Mountains appear a motionless mass, yet their true form is not such. We cannot know, when looking at a lifeless shell, that it contains a living being. Similarly, within the apparently inanimate rivers and mountains there dwells a hidden consciousness, and they take the form they wish. From the Kalika Purana, a minor Purana within the Shaktism tradition of Hinduism.

**For India's peoples:** pm - based on a prayer by Matthew Lamont of Australia

*Light of every burdened heart, illumine Your sacred land of India:*

*Breathe hope into its suffering and fear-filled places,*

*Transforming its people's grieving and unknowing.*

## **Re-imagining the world:**

I take the position that we must re-imagine the world and ourselves within it in ways that recognize and emphasise the interconnectedness and interdependency that exists within the natural order, an order from which we are not separate. To fail to do so will be to condemn descendants to lives of increasing misery and danger. Our key for this re-imagination is that of spirituality, theology and ethics. Given the anthropocentrism of these disciplines in western traditions, the challenge now is to find images for an ecotheology and a bioethics that extend our context of spirituality to include the nonhuman aspects of the world.

We strive to develop a spirituality that embraces Earth as a whole. We seek to re-imagine Earth, spirit and ourselves in ways that synthesize these three into a wholeness that is healing and empowering. We seek in the words of Thomas Berry, 'a new story'. This is vital work, but it is important to remember that the objective of this quest is not simply new images with which to replace those that have grown old and outmoded. What we are after is to change behaviour, to embody a new life, and to express a new spirit. Images and myths are powerful tools that can assist this process, but they can also turn in our hands and become obstructions. They can become new beliefs and dogmas that substitute one orthodoxy for another without liberating us into a life of the holistic spirit that is our true goal. So the craft of re-imagining Earth and spirit is a delicate one.

David Spangler, philosopher.

## **The vision of Father Thomas Berry (1914 – 2009):**

Thomas Berry's great vision as an eco-philosopher, cultural historian and scholar of the world's religions, is totally relevant for our times. His books have always inspired me. They are still available. His well-known books include -The Dream of the Earth (1988): The Great Work - Our Way Into The Future ((1999): Evening Thoughts - Reflections On the Earth as Sacred Community. (2006): and The Sacred Universe (2009).

## **A Navajo Blessing:**

*Be still within yourself and know that the trail is beautiful. May the winds be gentle upon your face, and your whole direction be straight and true as the flight of an eagle. Walk in harmony with Nature, with God and all People.*

*\*\*\* May we never be a stranger to that place within our heart where we are at one with life's source and tiniest bloom. \*\*\* pm*