

Covenant Program #6

SPIRIT OF CHORES

Light Candle

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

~Albert Schweitzer

Check-in

Opening Reading:

Check In

Opening Readings

Now imagine that you are washing the dishes. You are concentrating on the act of washing, clearing the mind of all other thoughts. Any other thought that enters the mind is gently pushed aside, so that the task at hand totally fills the mind. You are totally aware of the act you are doing, and as far as you are concerned, nothing else exists in the universe.

Concentrate for a moment on a dish and realize that it is an expression of God's will and essence. Although it may be hidden, there is a spark of the Divine in the dish. There is also a spark of the Divine in the water with which you are washing the dish. When a person develops such an awareness, then even the most mundane act can become an intimate experience of the Divine.

Aryeh Kaplan

in *Jewish Meditation*, quoted in *Spiritual Literacy*

I decided to honor Maundy Thursday by cleaning the kitchen.... In monasteries all over Christendom today, abbots and superiors knelt down on bare floors, washing and patting dry the feet of the lowliest kitchen monks....

I attacked the spice shelf, unscrewing each bottle and sniffing; if there wasn't a definite smell of an herb or a spice it went sailing into the trash bag. Better to leave a clean space filled with nothing than a cluttered space filled with things that were of no use to you anymore. My rubric for getting through this day.

I did a ruthless number on the refrigerator. Out went the rest of Miriam Stacy's tuna and noodle casserole, plastic container and all.... We had far too many plastic and metal-foil containers that jammed drawers when we tried to open them or clattered down on our heads from top cabinets when we were looking for something else....

The big black plastic garbage bag was filling fast. One must purify one's refrigerator with the same rigor as one purified one's heart.

Gail Godwin

in *Father Melancholy's Daughter* quoted in *Spiritual Literacy*

Reflection Questions~

1. Do you attack chores like Godwin or approach them with loving meditation?
1. Are there chores that you find deeply satisfying?
2. Is there a spark of the divine in Miriam Stacy's casserole? Is Godwin's approach compatible with such a view?
3. What do your chores keep you from doing? What is the spiritual cost of chores?
4. Can any sort of task be treated with the spirituality of a chore, or are chores special?

Reflective Silence~

- Discussing the Questions~

Business

Check-out

Closing Reading

My station wagon is being fixed now and I hope everything comes out OK. It's good to have a car you don't worry about denting. The wagon was always the one that got left out in the rain and snow. If there was a dirty job to be done, I did it in the wagon. I saved my good car because I wanted the good car to last. I've had three good cars since I bought the wagon. The wagon, mistreatment and all, has outlasted the cars I pampered.

When I get it back, the first thing I'm going to do is give it a nice full tank of high-octane gas, some clean, fresh oil and a warm bath. I want the wagon to know that it's loved.

- Andy Rooney in

Not That You Asked, quoted in *Spiritual Literacy*

Extinguish candle