Contemplative Service for Wednesday

August 9, 2023

[](https://www.wikiart.org/en/katsushika-hokusai/fuji-mountains-in-clear-weather-1831)

*image by Hokusai*

**First reading**: Matthew 17: 19-20

Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not heal the sick person as you did?” He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of amustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”

**Music**: Prelude #1 for Cello by Bach, performed by Ophelie Gaillard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poCw2CCrfzA>

**Second reading**: from “Practice for a World at Risk” by Joan Halifax

We share an aspiration to awaken from our own confusion, greed, and anger in order to free others from suffering. The bodhisattva vows at the heart of the Mahayana tradition are a powerful expression of what I call “wise hope,” of hope against all the odds. This is the kind of hope that is victorious over fear and hopelessness. For how else could we chant the impossible aspiration:

Creations are numberless,

I vow to free them.

Delusions are inexhaustible,

I vow to transform them.

Reality is boundless,

I vow to perceive it.

The awakened way is unsurpassable,

I vow to embody it.

**Music**: “Oblivion” composed by Astor Piazzolla, performed by La Ninfa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3HMQ5XE51U>

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

*I know the power that obedience has of making things easy which had seemed impossible.* ***– St Teresa of Avila***

**Communal Blessing**

Holy Guide,

We look to the impossible to be vast, to blare itself, to intimidate us. But here you are.

And we find that *your* impossible brings solace and hope, melody and embrace. Your impossibility has an intimacy that we never expected. And so we pray for the gift of recognition, that most impossible of human arts. You, Divine Love, make this possible. Amen.

**Music**: The Impossible Orchestra plays Arturo Márquez: Danzón No. 2 | with dancer Elisa Carrillo Cabrera

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4Mep1WSfp0>

*May you move with the grace of impossible music.*