

Rising Green

By Christine Loughlin, OP

In late January, CBS aired a documentary on global warming. As startlingly spectacular and frightening the images that showed the massive melting at the Arctic and Antarctic Poles, neither the producers nor the filming crew anticipated the scope of their efforts. Unplanned and unexpectedly, colossal segments of ice broke off from the glacial bergs and slid into the sea even as the narrator spoke and the camera panned the already diminished caps. On that Sunday evening, even if just for a few seconds, thousands of citizens sitting in living rooms glimpsed an understanding of *macro power*.¹ The scientists interviewed stated frankly that global warming is human driven. The human is the *macro power* determining Earth's fate.

Within the week following that media presentation, I happened upon two conversations in which someone shared – *I couldn't watch it*. A young woman added, "I can't 'watch' pictures that show the results of global warming."

A few days passed when there on the front page of the City & Region section was the traditional Ash Wednesday picture featured annually in The Boston Globe. Business-persons, laborers, older women and young men, one holding a child, moved in line at the Franciscan Shrine to receive sacramental ashes. *Remember from whence you come*. Ah, to remember from whence we come does excite good thoughts and stirs the movement of the heart to good action in our world!

March ushers in our cultural rituals folded into the natural rituals of Spring. Flocks of red winged blackbirds and grackles have descended into our trees. Dozens of birds swoop down to scratch the hard ground for seeds. The wooded swamp across the street and the brushy wetland past our well are sufficient for redwings even though we have no cattails. Communal nesters, fortunately, they will find places even in a diminished habitat. Robins and bluebirds are also about but we don't think they migrated far, if at all.

Seeds saved from last year's produce are planted in starter trays, some placed under the grow lights, others nestled near the window in the warm attic room. Amazing, as natural light increases, seeds bring forth leaf and blossom. A miracle of sorts! How frail leaves capture a photon of light and convert sun energy into a biochemical process that becomes the source of nourishment for just about every form of life on the planet is awesome. Of course, photosynthesis can be explained, but for most of us it's in tasting the glucose in sweet, succulent tomatoes or juicy apples that our sense of miracle awakens, if we allow ourselves to eat mindfully, that is. Mindfulness stirs remembrance.

The seed of human consciousness grows and matures in the same manner as all seed. With the proper conditions, in the exterior light of emerging culture and the interior light of intuitive inspiration, breakthroughs occur in an unbroken link of Creativity. In our cultural patterning that favors ethical response to human need, clusters of folks are emerging from every cultural expression around the globe "remembering" from whence we come. We see our common origin story and that challenges us to rethink our values and our ethical practices.

We are beginning to pay attention to other perspectives that point to voices we have been ignoring. Voices speaking with great urgency. They are among the oldest voices and theirs has become a scream, alerting us to danger, to reckoning. They are the presence that begs, *watch with me*, as their habitat slips into the sea. They have so much to teach us, not just about survival, but about the deeper mysteries of Life in its ever unfolding.

The seed of “cosmic consciousness” is ready to mature. If we dare allow ourselves the pain to *watch and pray* at the myriad sites of agonizing loss and death, a deep metanoia² may occur. Our *macro power* will become the *macro wisdom* that dreams a new reverence for the mystery of being alive in one Earth community. ■CL

1. macro-power, a word used by B. Swimme

2. metanoia: changing one's mind, often accompanied by repentance or a process of reforming the psyche as a form of self healing