

## Monday Quotes



### Grain

“God is experienced in community and within the space of solidarity.” –Paraphrase of Ada María Isasi-Díaz by Marianne Tierney FitzGerald

### Field

<sup>3</sup>Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” <sup>4</sup>Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” <sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup>What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup>Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ <sup>8</sup>The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:1-7

### Thoughts by Judy Mills, Madison

When Jesus started his ministry many leaders were wary of him. Nicodemus, however, was intrigued and wanted to learn more about Jesus. Even though he knew it was a risk, given his leadership position, Nicodemus visited Jesus by night.

In their conversation, Jesus teaches Nicodemus that one must be “born from above” in order to see the kingdom of God. This was a hard concept for Nicodemus (and most of us) to grasp and so Jesus compares it to an earthly phenomenon we know exists—we can hear the wind and see its effect (trees swaying), but we cannot see the wind itself, nor do we know from where it comes or where it goes.

In our daily lives, we may receive a gift of grace from an unexpected source. We may sense the presence of a force helping us through a difficult time, even though we cannot tell from where it originates or where it goes once it leaves us. There are many stories of people helping strangers, seemingly with no motivation to do so and with no expectation of reward or reciprocity. When we act in this way, we are behaving in a way “born of the Spirit.” You might say that these random acts of kindness represent a bit of heaven on earth.

Jesus chose to deliver the following message, one of the best-known passages in scripture, to a religious leader, Nicodemus: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” Those who believe in him will experience life after death. But it also points to God giving us Jesus as an example of how to live on earth--to be in solidarity with and advocate for the marginalized; to love our neighbors as ourselves--so that our acts, “born of the Spirit,” will draw us and others deeper into community. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Judy Mills