

The Road to Peace

Abdul Aziz Said

Presented at the Interfaith Prayer at the National Cathedral

Friday, October 26, 2001

To See a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the Palm of your Hand,
And Eternity in an Hour.
William Blake

Peace is not a goal to be pursued. It is always in the making. It is a journey towards a place where there is trust, mercy, and justice. We may not get there, but the journey is important and is never ending.

It is a process of being and doing. Peace is both task and experience. The task of peace is dealing with conditions that disregard human needs, human rights and undermine the environment.

The experience of peace is self knowledge. When we discover our authentic individuality we recognize the genuine uniqueness of others.

We discover peace through inner experience and outer engagement, through a transformation of awareness.

We discover peace through a change in our way of seeing and experiencing the universe and ourselves, and the relationship between them.

We discover peace through relearning, through seeing the world with fresh eyes and through acting and responding in new ways.

We discover peace through remembering, through waking up to what we really are and to what we are capable of.

We discover peace through healing, through the restoration of wholeness by “pulling ourselves together,” individually and collectively.

We discover peace through (and in) the realization that the whole of existence is reflected

in the parts, and from the parts comes the ever greater whole.

We discover the whole world needs the whole world.

On the road to peace, get caught in a love triangle. At the top of the triangle there is “thought,” at one bottom corner of the triangle there is “word” and on the other bottom corner there is “action.”

The love triangle shows how our thoughts connect with our words and actions. When our thoughts reflect love, our words are those of a lover and our actions are directed toward the Beloved. We are peace.

God is love, when we live in love we are living in peace. Love is a visible image of God. Everyone of us is God in the making.

Love is a dynamic force, not a state we possess. It is a force passing through us. To receive it we have to give it to others.

Peace enables us to recognize the spirit of God in each other, the sanctity of each human being. We all live in one world, increasingly interconnected with everyone. The forces that lead people to feel anger and joy impact on all of our lives.

When we respond from love we find refuge and strength. Everything on the planet has an ecological function. Love is the ecological function for humans. As we provide love to others, our love increases. We are all one.

If your education stretches your sympathy and moral imagination to include the wider human community, then you have truly learned something.

Learn to be a beginner and keep the passageway open, in and out of the heart.

Through education we discover the sacred. We come to reinvest the sacred in our lives.

The sacred is any process that links us to the greatest context to which we belong. When we discover the sacred we are doing God's work within the heart and mind. God works through us to bring all things together. We become bridge builders. We bring down the dividing walls.

Reinvestment of the sacred means the humanizing of the sacred. It refers to making the *human* sacred, the recognition that sacred activity is not separate from immediate, personal, and interpersonal experience. Our being together on this planet becomes, then, a sacred day today reality, and what we call God becomes human.

When peace emanates from us, peace returns to us. We become peaceful. We become a source and a mirror of peace. Let us polish our hearts. The Light of God shines through clear hearts.

We are not of the East or the West.
No boundaries exist in our breast.
We are free.
Ameen Rihani