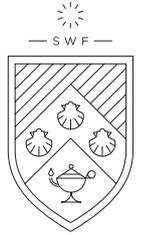


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Flourishing quotes posted in 2020

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Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something
unknown something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through
some stages of instability –
and that it may take a very long time...
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

To explain: from the Latin 'ex-planare', to flatten, spread out, make level. A great bulldozer will push the mountains inside the abysses and everything will become a luminous plain under midday sun...A good teacher is a luminous creature. Wherever he goes, darkness disappears... I became sure that I was no longer a good teacher when, instead of turning the lights on, I preferred to turn them off...I love the darkness which abides inside the deep and lovely woods of Frost's poetry... and the eerie atmosphere of the gothic cathedral...My whole Being reverberates...I suspect that I do not want to decipher the mystery. I want questions and not answers.

Rubem Alves

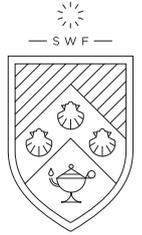
The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw
– and knew I saw – all things in God
and God in all things.

Mechtild of Magdeburg

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Be not lax in celebrating.
Be not lazy in the festive service of God.
Be ablaze with enthusiasm.
Let us be an alive, burning offering before the altar of God.

Hildegard of Bingen

In the confinement of our study rooms our knowledge seems to us a pillar of light. But when we stand at the door which opens out to the infinite, we realize that all concepts are but glittering motes that populate a sunbeam.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

Wisdom is knowledge deepened by love and leads to greater wholeness because it is known and sees with the inner eye of the heart. If love is absent from the core of knowledge – whether on the level of science, university education, or Christian faith – the end result is division, confusion, and separation. Love goes further than knowledge alone, because love is the essence of all that exists.

Ilia Delio

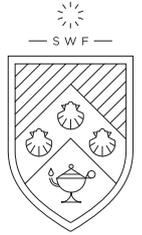
You are not Atlas carrying the world on your shoulder. It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you.

Vandana Shiva

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O gather up the brokenness / And bring it to me now
The fragrance of those promises / You never dared to vow
The splinters that you carry / The cross you left behind
Come healing of the body / Come healing of the mind [...]
Behold the gates of mercy / In arbitrary space
And none of us deserving / The cruelty or the grace
O solitude of longing / Where love has been confined
Come healing of the body / Come healing of the mind

Leonard Cohen

Thus says the Lord:
Stand at the crossroads, and look,
and ask for the ancient paths,
where the good way lies; and walk in it,
and find rest for your souls.
But they said, "We will not walk in it."

Jeremiah 6:16

Not a victory is gained, not a deed of faithfulness or courage is done, except upon a maybe; not a service, not a sally of generosity, not a scientific exploration or experiment or textbook, that may not be a mistake. It is only by risking our persons from one hour to another that we live at all. And often enough our faith beforehand in an uncertified result is the only thing that makes the result come true...

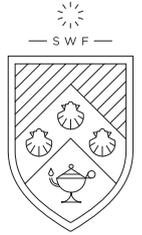
Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact.

William James

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The mind is its own place, and in it self
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

John Milton

My child, pay attention to what I say.
Listen carefully to my words.
Don't lose sight of them.
Let them penetrate deep into your heart,
for they bring life to those who find them,
and healing to their whole body.

Proverbs 4: 20-22

We thrive, in part, when we have purpose, when we still have more to do. The deliberate incomplete has long been a central part of creation myths themselves. In Navajo culture, some craftsmen and women sought imperfection, giving their textiles and ceramics an intended flaw called a "spirit line" so that there is a forward thrust, a reason to continue making work... The undone pattern is meant to give the weaver's spirit a way out, to prevent it from getting trapped and reaching what we sense is an unnatural end.

Sarah Lewis

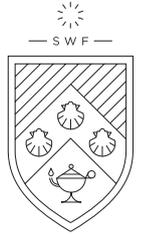
Let the beauty of what we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

Rumi

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Don't be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of too much life. Aim above morality. Be not simply good; be good for something.

Henry David Thoreau

The stars we are given, the constellations we make.

Rebecca Solnit

each pond with its blazing lilies
is a prayer heard and answered
lavishly,
every morning,

whether or not
you have ever dared to be happy,
whether or not
you have ever dared to pray.

Mary Oliver

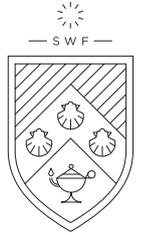
Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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When despair for the world grows in me [...]
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.[...]
For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Wendell Berry

I notice that it is only when my mother is working in her flowers that she is radiant, almost to the point of being invisible – except as Creator: hand and eye. She is involved in her work her soul must have. Ordering the universe in the image of her personal conception of Beauty.

Alice Walker

Ultimately, all the fire-power that the world can muster is not capable of pushing a single crocus through the frozen winter soil.

Margaret Silf

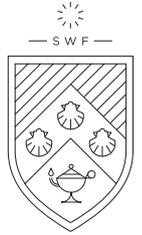
The day's farewell is expressed in twilight, in the magic of colour and beauty...Similarly, in old age, the twilight time of life, many of the unnoticed treasures in your life can now become available and visible to you. Often it is only with the twilight perception that you can really glimpse the mysteries of your soul.

John O'Donohue

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Once I remembered, I had detached a chrysalis from the trunk of an olive tree and placed it in my palm. Inside the transparent coating I discerned a living thing. It was moving. The hidden process must have reached its terminus; the future, still-enslaved butterfly was waiting with silent tremors for the sacred hour when it would emerge into the sunlight. It was not in a hurry. Having confidence in the light, the warm air, in God's eternal law, it was waiting.

But I was in a hurry. I wanted to see the miracle hatch before me as soon as possible, wanted to see how the body surges out of its tomb and shroud to become a soul. Bending over, I began to blow my warm breath over the chrysalis, and behold! a slit soon incised itself on the chrysalis's back, the entire shroud gradually split from top to bottom, and the immature, bright green butterfly appeared, still tightly locked together, its wings twisted, its legs glued to its abdomen. It squirmed gently and kept coming more and more to life beneath my warm persistent breath. One wing as pale as a budding poplar leaf disengaged itself from the body and began to palpitate, struggling to unfold along its entire length, but in vain. It stayed half open, shriveled. Soon the other wing moved as well, toiled in its own right to stretch, was unable to, and remained half unfolded and trembling. I, with a human being's effrontery, continued to lean over and blow my warm exhalation upon the maimed wings, but they had ceased to move now and had drooped down, as stiff and lifeless as stone.

I felt sick at heart. Because of my hurry, because I had dared to transgress an eternal law, I had killed the butterfly. In my hand I held a carcass. Years and years have passed, but that butterfly's weightless carcass has weighed heavily on my conscience ever since.

Nikos Kazantzakis

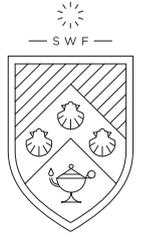
Another world is not only possible, she's on her way. Maybe many of us won't be here to greet her, but on a quiet day, if I listen very carefully, I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy

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“What is it, what is happening?”

“Everything,” he answered her, “everything, all at once. It is not one springtime, but fifty; and not one or two great terrors flown away, but a thousand small shadows lifted from the land. Wait and see.”...

The folk of the villages greeted them cautiously...Only the oldest among them had ever seen the spring before, and many suspected the rampaging greenness of being a plague or an invasion...

“They will need time to feel comfortable with flowers,” he said.

Peter Beagle

Walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.

George Fox

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.

Matthew 7:12

What makes loneliness an anguish is not that I have no one to share my burden, but this: I have only my own burden to bear.

Dag Hammarskjöld

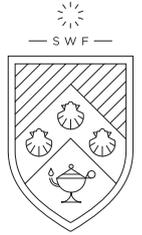
How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a sibling in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

1 John 3:17-18

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For a long time they looked at the river beneath them, saying nothing, and the river said nothing too, for it felt very quiet and peaceful on this summer afternoon.

“Tigger is all right, really,” said Piglet lazily.

“Of course he is,” said Christopher Robin.

“Everybody is really,” said Pooh. “But I don’t suppose I’m right,” he said.

“Of course you are,” said Christopher Robin.

A.A. Milne

We can make our minds so like still water
that beings gather about us
that they may see, it may be, their own images,
and so live for a moment with a clearer,
perhaps even with a fiercer life because of our quiet.

William Butler Yeats

[People] may forget what you said, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Carl W. Buehler

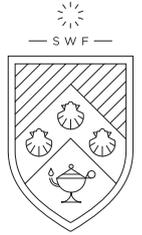
You stand with the least likely to succeed until success is succeeded by something more valuable: kinship. You stand with the belligerent, the surly and the badly behaved until bad behavior is recognized for the language it is: the vocabulary of the deeply wounded and of those whose burdens are more than they can bear.

Greg Boyle

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Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18

Hospitality is the practice of God's welcome by reaching across difference to participate in God's actions bringing justice and healing to our world in crisis.

Letty Russell

If you don't understand, ask questions. If you're uncomfortable about asking questions, say you are uncomfortable about asking questions and then ask anyway. It's easy to tell when a question is coming from a good place. Then listen some more. Sometimes people just want to feel heard. Here's to possibilities of friendship and connection and understanding.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I will meet you there.

Rumi

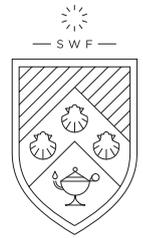
People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that. No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do.

Dorothy Day

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Pushing down hard with his fists on the table-top he heaved himself up to where he was standing. For the first time we saw he wanted one leg. It was gone from the knee joint down. He was hopping sideways to reach for his stick in the corner when he lost his balance. He would have fallen in a heap if Brendan hadn't leapt forward and caught him.

"I'm as crippled as the dark world," Gildas said.

"If it comes to that, which one of us isn't, my dear?" Brendan said.

Gildas with but one leg. Brendan sure he'd misspent his whole life entirely. Me that had left my wife to follow him and buried our only boy. The truth of what Brendan said stopped all our mouths. We was cripples all of us. For a moment or two there was no sound but the bees.

"To lend each other a hand when we're falling," Brendan said. "Perhaps that's the only work that matters in the end."

Frederick Buechner

Forgiveness flounders because I exclude the enemy from the community of humans even as I exclude myself from the community of sinners. But no one can be in the presence of the God of the crucified Messiah for long without overcoming this double exclusion – without transposing the enemy from the sphere of monstrous inhumanity into the sphere of shared humanity and herself from the sphere of proud innocence into the sphere of common sinfulness. When one knows that the torturer will not eternally triumph over the victim, one is free to rediscover that person's humanity and imitate God's love for him. And when one knows that God's love is greater than all sin, one is free to see oneself in the light of God's justice and so rediscover one's own sinfulness.

Miroslav Volf

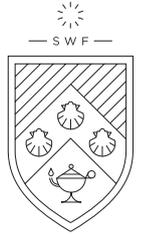
For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of [God's] Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

Romans 5:10

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[God] has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8

The problem with [a] focus on practices has been its blindness to the colonial world formed by practicing Christians...Faithful Christian practice was part of colonial history...But that is not the only story of faithful Christian practice. Many...resisted worldly power and...shared together in the witness of Paul, of strength made manifest in weakness... The difference [is one] not of quality, or consistency, or even knowledge, but of community.

Willie Jennings

Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place.

Jeremiah 22:3

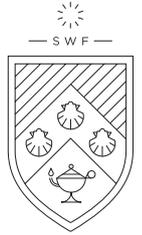
We now hear new voices of hope from women, from the Indigenous peoples of the world, from groups considered inferior such as the Dalits, and from the earth itself. These are strangely new voices, but they have to be heeded. There is a call for a major paradigm shift, a journey into the unknown and unfamiliar. This is a journey into the, until now, feared local and particular. This is a journey of being attentive to the place and the memories that go with it and the experiences that give it and the community identity.

Aruna Gnanadason

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Too often our theological or intellectual posture is one of power and control. We expect others (e.g...marginalized groups and outsiders) to be adaptable, but we refuse to be so ourselves. In our attachment to power and control, rigidity, superiority, and staleness grow. This diseased posture stops Christians from forming habits of humility, fluidity, embodiment, and engagement, which lead to transformation.

Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Graham Hill

Though my soul is set in darkness,
it will rise in perfect light;
I have loved the stars too truly
to be fearful of the night.

Sarah Williams

This is what you shall do: Love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to every one that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown, or to any man or number of men, go freely with powerful uneducated persons, and with the young, and with the mothers of families... re-examine all you have been told in school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul, and your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency not only in its words but in the silent lines of its lips and face and between the lashes of your eyes and in every motion and joint of your body."

Walt Whitman

The quotes above were selected by Emma Pavey, Communications and Resources Officer at SWF, for our 2020 theme of Flourishing: Life in All Its Fullness.

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