

SANTI SAYS: The times they are a changing.

By Santi Meunier

Like the familiar tune, “the times they are a chan-ging”. Day-light savings is again upon us and the dark-ness descends earlier and earlier until on December 21st when we reach the shortest day of the year. Then the process reverses itself and the days ever so slowly begin to lengthen and the early light returns. The election is here after months of debates, accusations and constant television coverage, and whichever way it goes there will be change. The colors of the trees change daily. The sharp crimson and the fiery yellows will in a matter of weeks fade to brown and fall away. The barren limbs will hold the frozen rain and snow glistening in the sunlight like diamonds. The children are full tilt into the new school year and some of the stores are already displaying their Christmas decoration. Yes, change is constant and very little of it is within our control. As Giuseppe di Lampedusa put it, “If you want things to stay as they are, things will have to change”.

“You can’t step into the river twice.”

-Heraclitus

The times are changing. Are we changing with them? When we resist change or try to deny it, we create an atmosphere of fear and

uneasiness within us. As this builds up inside the desire to project it out at someone or something grows stronger until we convince ourselves that “they” are to blame. Being angry at the outside culprit gets us off the hook. We convince ourselves that we don’t have to shift our perception, all we have to do is try to control the supposed problem. If it can’t be controlled then we can be justifiably anger. Does this sound familiar? I know few among us who have not fallen into that trap and believed fully in the misperception – me included. Sure, blaming others for our frustrations gets us off the hook, but are we happy? Abraham Lincoln said, “Do you want to be right or do you want to be happy?” Are we clinging to our misery and self-righteous anger to keep the “drama” of our lives afloat, or are we secretly afraid that happiness is too elusive and fleeting to count on? There is another way, because being happy is far more precious than being right. In Robert Ingersoll’s creed he prescribes the formula, “Happiness is the only good. The place to be happy is here. The time to be happy is now. The way to be happy is to make others so.”

Change is permanent.

The Talmud teaches us that it is

human to cling to the familiar but it is also futile. “Would that life were like a shadow cast by a wall or a tree, but it is like the shadow of a bird in flight.”

It is foolish to think that because we don’t want things to change, that will have any effect on the outcome. Outwardly, things will be what they will be, but inwardly, there is much that we can do to change. Acceptance is the key to embracing change and the door to happiness. Going with the flow of the new while experiencing the melancholy and grief of what has past allows us to feel fully and bear no scars. Resistance cuts deeply into our being like a tug of war rope that we refuse to drop even when we know there is no way to win. Let go or be dragged! Let go and find the gifts that flow out of the apparent emptiness.

Opportunity is in the new.

Let’s approach the changes in the world with a new attitude bringing light to all the situations that face us. Holding close and sharing with those we love both our vulnerabilities as well as our strengths. The darkness allows us to view the stars and to appreciate the sunshine and the warmth it brings. Reaching out to those in need as they reach out to us creates



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a circle with no beginning and no end. Happiness is not elusive, it is real. It lives on the positive side of the world and grows in an atmosphere of gratitude. Each one of us has a choice. There are none among us that are “lucky” but many who are wise.

November is the month of Thanksgiving. Let’s be thankful for the blessings and the challenges that face us. Spread happiness as you travel and your destination will be a welcomed one.