

Greetings, in the name of Jesus Christ!

“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just the first step.”

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Have you ever seen anything in your life more wonderful
than the way the sun, every evening, relaxed and easy, floats toward the horizon

and into the clouds or the hills, or the ruffled sea,
and is gone - and how it slides again

out of the blackness, every morning, on the other side of the world,
like a red flower

streaming upward on its heavenly oils, say, on a morning in early summer,
at its perfect imperial distance - and have you ever felt for anything
such wild love - do you think there is anywhere, in any language,
a word billowing enough for the pleasure

that fills you, as the sun reaches out, as it warms you
as you stand there, empty-handed - or have you too turned from this world—
or have you too gone crazy for power, for things?

Mary Oliver, *The Sun*

“When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.”

from: *Let Us Break Bread Together*
African American spiritual

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I recently stumbled across this poem by Mary Oliver. As I thought about it, the line from *Let Us Break Bread Together* came to me as well. And I thought about how the sun, like so many things in our lives, can be wholesome and life-giving, or can take us in a completely different direction. This time of year, we enjoy expanded amounts of daylight, and usually, robust amounts of sunlight. A sunrise is a majestic event to witness.

But, too much sun on our bodies can also have deleterious effects. Sun damage to the eyes, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, are all to be avoided; including painful sunburn.

The sun can be life-giving or life-depleting, and so too can bending one’s knee.

When I lived in Key West, I attended St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. It was my first exposure to the Anglo-Catholic dimension of Anglicanism that was an outgrowth of the 19th-century Oxford Movement. It is a tradition in Anglo-Catholic parishes to *genuflect*, literally: “to bend the knee,” at the name of Jesus and before any Reserved Sacrament as an act of reverence and devotion.

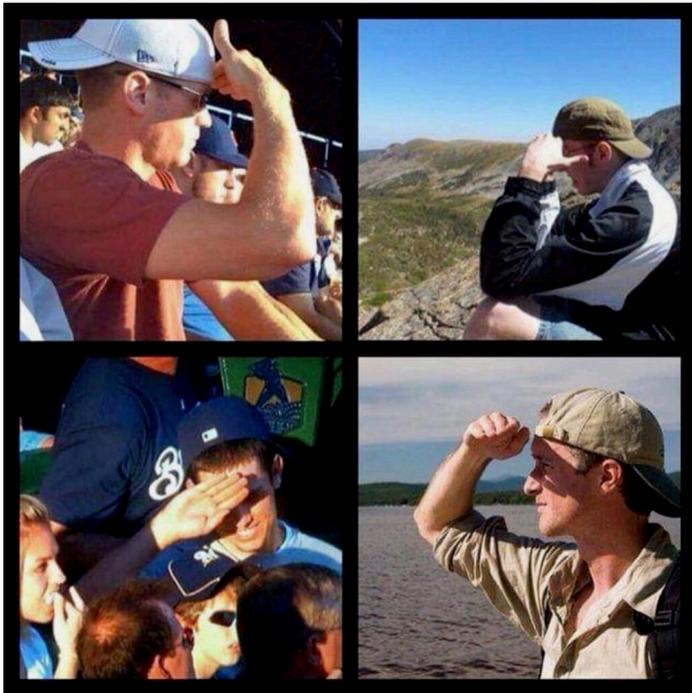
Sadly, now we know how an act of “bending the knee” can also be life-depleting. Watching George Floyd take his last few breaths is forever etched in our consciousness.

What are the elements in your life that have both life-giving and life-depleting attributes? How do you manage the tension between the two? I know there are parts of my life that have both. Offering them up to God in prayer may be a way to ease the tension.

May we find a moment to kneel, to turn our face to the rising sun, and say, “*Lord, have mercy on me.*”

A Little Coronavirus Humor:

For men confused by the function vs. style of a baseball caps, we pray to the Lord.



**Why must I prove that I am me when I pay bills over the phone?
Did someone else call to pay my bills, and if they did, why don't you let them?**

