

Advent Meditations - Week One - Hope

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -

BY EMILY DICKINSON

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -

That perches in the soul -

And sings the tune without the words -

And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -

And sore must be the storm -

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chillest land -

And on the strangest Sea -

Yet - never - in Extremity,

It asked a

crumb - of me.

Art - The Hope No.7 by Natalia Baykalova



Hope is defined as a feeling of trust.

And Paul wrote to the Roman Church....

... we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.
Romans 5:3-5

Cynthia Bourgeault as quoted at the Centre for Action and Contemplation
(for entire post - <https://cac.org/mystical-hope-2020-04-16/>)

We might make the following observations about this other kind of hope, which we will call *mystical hope*. In contrast to our usual notions of hope:

1. Mystical hope is not tied to a good outcome, to the future. It lives a life of its own, seemingly without reference to external circumstances and conditions.
2. It has something to do with *presence*—not a future good outcome, but the immediate experience of being met, held in communion, by something intimately at hand.
3. It bears fruit within us at the psychological level in the sensations of strength, joy, and satisfaction: an “unbearable lightness of being.” But mysteriously, rather than deriving these gifts from outward expectations being met, it seems to produce them from within. . .

Questions and thoughts for your own reflection and expression.

What colour is hope for you?

What does hope sound like?

Do you struggle for hope?

Is hope elusive?

Can hope be created?

Or is it found?