Soul Retreat with Robert Sardello at the Christine Center, November 2-6, 2017

An invitation by S. Gabriele:

Early this November I will again have the pleasure and privilege of hosting a seminal Christine Center contemplative experience with Robert Sardello. Like any thoughtful person, and certainly like the many guests with whom I have had conversation, these times of ours “trouble” me. I have for many months found myself thinking of metaphors to describe this state of soul. In mid-summer, in the heat of both the season and amid the throes of tumult and change in our country, in my personal experience, and in my own community... the words: “refiner’s fire” flashed into consciousness, followed by a remembrance of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the Hebrew Book of Daniel.

Surprising myself, I even heard myself speak these names out loud involuntarily, startling myself into a kind of hyper-alertness during a usually silent meditation. Thrown into the “fiery furnace” these three were seen to be accompanied by a radiant fourth, as if offered a way of being that transmuted consuming flame into enlightening presence.

With this image I found myself strangely consoled, and I began tracking “radiance” more carefully. The good news is that as I shifted into an intentional perception, radiance manifested. Not always readily and not always willingly on my part, I could note “Shining” ever-present.

Weeks later, the words of Clarrissa Pinkola Estes, written during another collectively troubling time came to mind,

“One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these -- to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.” [http://www.huna.org/html/cpestes.html]

Such “shining” is what holds me passionately in service and in residence at the Christine Center. My latest metaphor is that here, I myself, all our staff and volunteers and especially all our guests can find safe harbor to practice such “shining.” Imagine my joy and enthusiasm when I recently received from
Robert Sardello’s updated description of the contemplative deepening experience he will offer at the Christine Center in November:

Robert Sardello, Ph.d writes:

**What Lies Ahead? Spiritual Presence in Troubled Times**

Troubled times, these times, bring the gift of soul-searching. What spiritual capacities and practices can meet and balance present rising forces of disintegration – environmental, social, moral, political, personal, institutional, religious and cultural? Conscious awareness and practical presence within these capacities change reaction, denial, and underlying hopelessness, from living in mere survival or false hope into living within and as **radiance**. We look deeply into ourselves and the world and confront the darkness that is the dead-end of self-will. We work toward embodying the new mysteries of this time – the transfiguring alchemical mysteries of the forming of our body of radiance from the body of earth, water, air, and fire. We work at re-imagining ritual as new daily living in:

- The body of Sufficiency
- The body in Equilibrium of the present moment
- The body meeting and transforming weariness
- Entering the body of Praise, the body of Being
- Through Being cathedrals
- Through the ritual of “Truth-ing”
- Through the bodily being of true individuality rather than individualism
- Through daily rituals of transformation.

*In short, this soul retreat (workshop) helps us begin to live as if we were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.”*

I treasure the gift of such powerful synchronicities. I once again found myself saying “*Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,*” aloud, this time in happy recognition and delighted confirmation. I am so ready to join in a circle of retreat with others who know the burning disturbance of our times. I hope you can join us. **Radiance accompanies us and bids us to show our shining soul.**

**Robert Sardello:**

Robert Sardello is an independent researcher and practitioner of spiritual presence attuned to these times. He served in numerous positions - Chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Dallas, Director of Studies at The Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, faculty member of the Chalice of Repose Project, Co-Director of the School of Spiritual Psychology. He is the author of eight books and eight monographs, all concerned with soul life within “troubled times” including *Silence: The Mystery of Wholeness* and *Heartfulness.* He travels worldwide giving presentations and