

On Pagan Solidarity

Full Comment

Crystal Blanton

High Priestess with Solitaries of the Second Circle and Pagan author.

January 2013

Solidarity is a means to supporting one another in our chosen spiritual path. It gives us road maps and access to means of social, legal and structural systems that help guarantee the same freedoms that non-minority religious groups enjoy. Is it the same thing as institutionalizing our religion? Not exactly.

Giving a chosen community the resources and framework to maneuver within society does not equate to orthodoxy of practice or mainstreaming of beliefs. There are plenty of organizations and structures that communities have in place for the protection and support of their members. There are (for example) associations for social workers and although they have a system of shared values, each social worker will practice differently, use their skills differently and work in different areas of the field. This is an example of communities that come together for the collective support of individual practices.

We need some of the power that institutions bring to any community or movement. Individual power is important and so is the power of the collective community voice. Togetherness commands attention where society devalues the solitary voice. It is learning to exist on an even playing field with greater society by pooling together for our collective needs.

The key is finding a way to use the concepts of community solidarity in balance with some of the undesirable things that come with community dynamics.