

Quiet Day 4 February 2023

EPIPHANY & THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS II

9:30 - 9:40 **Introduction**

9:40 - 10:40 **First Conference**

9:40 - 9:55 First session of reflections on the theme of the day

9:55 - 10:18 First session for thoughtful, conversational prayer: Restrooms, refreshments, stroll the grounds, reflect in the church. The entire campus is open to us. **Please maintain quiet. Please keep talking to a minimum and please talk quietly. Thank you!**

10:20 - 10:40 First session of Silent Prayer in the Sanctuary. (Or thoughtful meditation in the Music Center.)
[Enter silently from 10:18 to 10:20. At 10:20 we will intone the bell and begin silent prayer.]

10:40 - 11:40 **Second Conference**

10:40 - 10:55 Second session of reflections on the theme of the day

10:55 - 11:18 Second session for thoughtful, conversational prayer: Restrooms, refreshments, stroll the grounds, reflect in the church. The entire campus is open to us. **Please maintain quiet. Please keep talking to a minimum and please talk quietly. Thank you!**

11:20 - 11:40 Second session of Silent Prayer in the Sanctuary. (Or thoughtful meditation in the Music Center.)
[Enter silently from 11:18 to 11:20. At 11:20 we will intone the bell and begin praying.]

11:40 - 12:00 **Third Conference**

11:40 - 11:55 Third session of reflections on the theme of the day

11:55 - 12:18 Third session for thoughtful, conversational prayer: Restrooms, refreshments, stroll the grounds, reflect in the church. The entire campus is open to us. **Please maintain quiet. Please keep talking to a minimum and please talk quietly. Thank you!**

12:20 - 12:40 Third session of Silent Prayer in the Sanctuary. (Or thoughtful meditation in the Music Center.)
[Enter silently from 12:18 to 12:20. At 12:20 we will intone the bell and begin praying.]

12:40 - 1:00 **Eucharist. All are welcome.**

Epiphany and the Transformation of Consciousness II

The season of The Epiphany begins with the story of the Magi and ends with the Transfiguration of Jesus. Both stories are meant to move us beyond our normal seeing. Saint Paul invites the same when he prays ... that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be so strengthened that you come to know the love that surpasses knowing. In today's quiet day, we will explore how the practices of silence, the Lord's Prayer, and praying the scriptures help us remove our inner obstacles and open us more and more to boundless Presence, boundless love.

The Transfiguration. Matthew 17:1-9

¹Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Humanity has been raised from the dead.”

The Beatitudes in Brief

Humility

Welcoming (not resisting) suffering (our own and humanity’s)

Restraining one’s power or “self-control,” one of the fruits of the Spirit

Hungering and thirsting for God and God’s kingdom/righteousness

Merciful

An authentic, self-examined life

Peacemaker

Responding to aggression, insult, and injury without reaction or violence

Thomas Keating’s Seven Stages of Centering Prayer

*Nothing could be more
down to earth or more
humbling than this
boundless Presence,
which just is. It doesn’t
have to prove itself.
It doesn’t have to
acquire anything.
It just is.*

The essence of Centering Prayer is consenting to God’s presence and action within. The logo of Contemplative Outreach as depicted on our newsletter suggests how this consent normally develops. The seven stages of Centering Prayer outlined below continue these steps beyond the present logo and dispose us toward ever-deepening self-surrender. These seven stages might be called the process of Centering Prayer. I summarize them as follows:

1. Silence is consenting to God’s presence – what Jesus calls the Kingdom of God – within and among us. External silence supports this movement.

2. Solitude flows from interior silence. Disregarding our interior dialogue leads to “resting in God” (Saint Gregory the Great), and to consciousness without particular content.

3. Solidarity is the awareness of increasing oneness with God, with the whole human family, and with all creation.

4. Service is following the ever-present inspirations of the Spirit not only during the time of formal prayer, but in the details of everyday life. It is a spontaneous expression of solidarity: God in us serving God in others.

5. Stillness is what Jesus called “prayer in secret” (Matthew 6:6). This is the experience of God’s presence beyond rational concepts, beyond preoccupation with one’s personal thoughts and desires.

6. Simplicity is the integration of contemplation and action, a growing capacity to live in the midst of duality– the ups and downs of daily life – without losing the non-dual perspective. Contemplation is not the same as action. They are distinct but they are not separate.

7. Surrender is the total gift of self to God, a movement from union to unity. It marks the beginning of what Jesus calls “eternal life” as an abiding state.

As we are moved through the stages of grace, our perspective changes in regard to Centering Prayer, the contemplative life, and God. In between the steps there may be delightful plateaus as well as dark nights, all of which have physical, mental, and spiritual consequences. The most transforming dark nights seem to be primarily psychological states, and the darkest of all is the purely spiritual suffering that arises from just being a creature, apparently unequipped for the hazards and trials of this life, but going through them with invincible confidence in God’s love.

Matthew 6:9-13

But whenever you pray, go into your inner room and close (lock, bar) the door and pray to your father in secret, and your father who sees in secret will reward you.

Luke 11:2-4

She (Martha) had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his word.

11:1 Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When pray say:

Father

our
who dwells in the heavens;
let be hallowed/sacred your Name;
let your kingdom come;
let your will be done,
as in heaven also on earth;
our bread, the *epiousion*¹, give to us today;
and forgive us our debts,
as we also forgive those indebted to us;
and do not lead us into temptation,
but deliver/rescue us from evil.

Father,

let be hallowed/sacred your Name
let your kingdom come
our bread, the *epiousion*, give to us each day
and forgive us our sins,
as we also forgive those indebted to us
and do not lead us into temptation

¹ “*epiousion*” = super substantial or the bread of the new era (the Kingdom of God) or the Holy Spirit

Lectio Divina (lectio)

OR

The ART of Engaging Holy Scripture (taehs)

lectio	meditatio	oratio	contemplatio
observation	attraction	response	rest

Centering Prayer

