

Quiet Day 14 January 2023

Epiphany & the Transformation of Consciousness

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

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 Story of the Magi. Matthew 2:1-12

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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 Man has been raised from the dead.”

Ephesians 3:14-19

3:14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.¹⁶ I pray that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you power to be strengthened through the Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ to dwell Christ in your hearts through faith, in love you being firmly rooted and grounded,¹⁸ in order that you may be fully strengthened to lay hold with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,¹⁹ to know indeed that which goes beyond knowledge love of Christ, in order that you may be filled up into all the fullness of God.

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.

“Lord, teach us to

them, “When

Father

our

who dwells in the heavens;

Luke 11:2-4

She (Martha) had a sister named Mary,

Lord’s feet and listened to his word.

11:1 Jesus was praying in a certain place,

finished, one of his disciples said to him,

pray, as John taught his disciples.” He said to

pray say:

Father

let be hallowed/sacred your Name;

let be hallowed/sacred your Name

let your kingdom come;

let your kingdom come

let your will be done,
as in heaven also on earth;

our bread, the *epiousion*, give to us today;
day

our bread, the *epiousion*, give to us each

and forgive us our debts,
as we also forgive those indebted to us;
us

and forgive us our sins,
as we also forgive those indebted to

and do not lead us into temptation,
but deliver/rescue us from evil.

and do not lead us into temptation

Lectio Divina (lectio)

OR

The ART of Engaging Holy Scripture (taehs)

lectio	meditatio	oratio	:contemplatio
observation	attraction	response	rest

Centering prayer



