

Quiet Day 13 April 2024

Listening to the God Who Speaks – Learning to Hear the Heartbeat of God Part II – The “little book” of Sacred Scriptures

- 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.]
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- 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.]
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- 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.

Listening to the God Who Speaks

The gospel of John tells us that at the Last Supper, the Beloved Disciple leaned against Jesus' breast and in so doing "heard the heartbeat of God." That heartbeat can still be heard in all that God has made, as we become still and aware. Wisdom teachers throughout the centuries have been teaching that God's revelation, God's heartbeat is continuing to be known to us through the Three Great Books: The "Big" Book of the Cosmos; the "little" [in size] Book of Sacred Scriptures; and The Book of our Heart's Journey. Using the prayers of Celtic Christians throughout the ages, today we will ponder together the revelation of God through the Books of Sacred Scriptures to experience more deeply Divine Presence – the heartbeat of God in all that is.

Listening to the God Who Speaks . . . Learning to Hear the Heartbeat of God in All That Is

First Conference Readings for Reflection

*The kingdom of God is inside you and all around you
Not in a mansion of wood and stone
Split a piece of wood and I am there
Lift a stone and you will find me*

Nag Hammadi

Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you' and they ask me 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses, "You shall tell the children of Israel this . . . *Yahweh* . . . this is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations."

Exodus 3:14ff

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God . . . God is love . . .

John 4:7-8

Second Conference Reading for Reflection

And God created humankind . . . and it was "very good"

*In the beginning O God, you formed my body and gave it breath.
Renew me this day in the image of your love.
O great God, grant me your grace, O great God grant me your joy this day.
And let me be made pure in the well of your health.*

Carmina Gaedelica

Third Conference Readings for Reflection

Jesus says "out of love for you and for your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth; all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. I call you, O Sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in a hell of your own making! Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated."

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 seven stages of Centering Prayer outlined below dispose us towards 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” (St 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 of 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” (Matt. 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.
