

Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, February 5, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

The Magdalen Community is a connective community seeking conversation and dialogue with other spiritualities and religious traditions.

Opening Music

From the All-Night Vigil, Opus 37, Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Performance by the Houston Chamber Choir, Robert Simpson, Artistic Director (Sung in Church Slavik)

Ave Maria

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, for thou has borne the Savior of our souls.

Call to Silence and Opening Meditation

Opening Greeting

Solo: Peace Be With You.

Unison: Acquire My Peace within you.

Opening Dialogue

Solo: Where are you from?

Unison: We have come from the place where light is produced from itself.

Solo: Where is that place?

Unison: It's a mystery.

Solo: But can you say you image the light?

Unison: Yes, indeed. We carry the light within.

Solo: And the peace?

Unison: Yes, also the peace.

Solo: How do you know of such light and such peace?

Unison: The sign is the feeling.

The sign is the movement from within.

The sign is the passion for the well-being of all.

Solo: What are your other signs?

Unison: Our recognitions of injustice and hatred and oppression throughout the globe, of power struggles and violence that seem unending.

Solo: Can we turn those around?

Unison: We must seek to do so.

Solo: Are you willing to spread your light and your peace?

*Unison: We are eager to spread them.
They spread just as love spreads.*

Solo: The kingdom spreads out on the earth, just as love spreads.

Unison: But some people are not aware of it.

Solo: Yet you are aware.

*Unison: Yes, indeed.
We are aware of the light and the movement and the peace.
And we cannot stand back.
We will step forward.
We will overcome the violence, the domination, the hatred,
and spread love.*

Readings and Meditation (please observe two minutes of silence between readings)

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures: 1 Samuel 2:1–11

Hannah prayed and said,

*'My heart exults in the LORD;
my strength is exalted in my God.
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in my victory.*

*There is no Holy One like the LORD,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.*

*Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.*

The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble gird on strength.
Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are fat with spoil.
The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.
The LORD kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
The LORD makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low, he also exalts.
He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's,
and on them he has set the world.
'He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness;
for not by might does one prevail.
The LORD! His adversaries shall be shattered;
the Most High will thunder in heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king,
and exalt the power of his anointed.'

A Reading from The Gospel of Mary Magdalen

Peter said to Mary, "Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than all other women. Tell us the words of the Savior that you remember, the things which you know that we don't because we haven't heard them."

Mary responded, "I will teach you about what is hidden from you." And she began to speak these words to them.

She said, "I saw the Lord in a vision and I said to him, 'Lord, I saw you today in a vision.' He answered me, 'How wonderful you are for not wavering at seeing me! For where the mind is, there is the treasure.'

A Reading from the Greek Testament: Luke 1:39—56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said,

*'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.*

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.*

*His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.*

*He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.*

*He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;*

*he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.*

*He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'*

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

A Reading from the Qur'ân (Selections from Sûrah 19):

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Mention in the Book how Mary withdrew from her people to an Eastern place. She chose to be secluded from them. We sent her Our spirit, who presented himself to her as a full-grown human being. She said: "I take refuge with the Mercy-giving from you, unless you are someone who does his duty."

He said: "I am only your Lord's messenger to bestow a clean-living boy on you," She said: "How shall I have a boy when no human being has ever touched me, nor am I a loose woman?" He said: "Thus your Lord has said: "It is a simple matter for Me [to do]. We will grant him as a sign for mankind and a mercy from Ourselves." It is a matter that has been decided."

So she conceived him, and withdrew to a remote place to have him. Labor pains came over her by the trunk of a datepalm. She said: "If only I had died before this, and been forgotten, overlooked!"

Someone called out to her from below where she was: "Dont feel so sad! Your Lord has placed a brook at your feet. Shake the trunk of the datepalm towards you so it will drop some fresh dates on you. Eat and drink, and refresh yourself. Should you see even a single human being, then say: "I have vowed to keep a fast to the Mercy-giving whereby I'll never speak to any person today!"

She carried him back to her family. They said: "Mary, you have brought something hard to believe! Kinswoman of Aaron, your father was no evil man, nor was your mother a loose woman." She pointed to him. They said: "How shall we talk to someone who is a child in the cradle?"

He said: "I am God's servant. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet. He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and commissioned me to pray and [pay] the welfare tax so long as I live; and [to act] considerate towards my mother. He has not made me domineering, hard to get along with. Peace be on the day I was born, and the day I shall die and the day I am raised to life again!"

Such was Jesus, the son of Mary; [it is] a true statement which they are still puzzling over. It is not God's role to adopt a son. Glory be to Him! Whenever He determines upon some matter, He merely tells it: "Be!", and it is. God is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him [Alone]. This is a Straight Road [to follow].

Call to Conversation

Closing Music

From the All-Night Vigil, Opus 37 by Sergei Rachmaninoff

Theotokion—Hymn to the Mother of God

*To thee, the victorious leader of triumphant hosts,
we thy servants, delivered from evil,
offer hymns of thanksgiving, O Theotokos!*

*Since thou dost possess invincible might,
set us free from all calamities, so that we may cry to thee:
“Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!”*

Closing Dialogue

Solo: Are you aware of the light and the peace within you?

*Unison: We have the feeling and the movement,
The passion for the well-being of all.*

*Solo: Light spreads, just as love spreads.
Are you willing to speak your feeling of light?*

*Unison: Yes, indeed, we must speak the feeling.
We must act the peace.*

*Solo: Then let us practice the feeling.
Let us practice the action of peace.*

*Unison: Let us dance the feeling.
Let us dance the peace.
Let us dance from the light.*

*Solo: Let us move together
In the light and the peace.*

Unison: Let us go forth in the power of the Spirit.

*For more information about the Magdalen Community, please contact
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