

# Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, December 17, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

*The Magdalen Community is a connective community seeking conversation and dialogue with other spiritualities and religious traditions. This Community takes its inspiration from The Gospel of Mary, where Jesus encourages the assembled community to find the divine nature within.*

**Opening Music** - *The Magdalene Mystique: Songs from Within,*  
c Anita Kruse, 2006

## Opening Meditation

*"Search the Darkness" from The Rumi Collection, edited by Kabir Helminski Boston: Shambhala Classics, 2000, 39*

*Sit with your friends; don't go back to sleep. Don't sink like a fish to the bottom of the sea.*

*Surge like an ocean,  
don't scatter yourself like a storm.*

*Life's waters flow from darkness.  
Search the darkness, don't run from it.*

*Night travelers are full of light,  
and you are, too; don't leave this companionship.*

*Be a wakeful candle in a golden dish,  
don't slip into the dirt like quicksilver.*

*The moon appears for night travelers,  
be watchful when the moon is full.*

*(Furuzanfar # 2232, translated by Kabir Helminski)*

## Readings and Call to Conversation

### *A Reading from Matthew 9: 9-13*

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

### *A Reading from Interrupted by God: Glimpses from the Edge by Tracey Lind (Cleveland: Pilgrims' Press): 168-169.*

"What God demands and expects of God's people is nothing more and nothing less than what God offers from the divine self: extravagant, indiscriminate, undeserved, abundant, unconditional, all-inclusive love... Jesus' table fellowship - those with whom he ate - was symbolic of his all-inclusive love. Everybody was invited to Jesus' dinner table, and if you showed up you couldn't be certain who else would be in attendance. Sometimes, it would be quite a surprise... Now when we come to the church - the beloved body of Christ. Does the church really love in the inclusive spirit of Jesus? We have made so many rules about who's in and who's out; what kind of love is acceptable and what's not; who's invited to the party; and who can or cannot feast at the table. In my humble opinion, the continuing debate over homosexuality, women in the ordained ministry, salvation, and an open invitation to the communion table - as well as the ongoing struggle with race and class in the church - is an utter embarrassment. It misses the whole point of Jesus' ministry. Frankly, I can understand why so many spiritual seekers avoid church; its not always very spiritual; nor does it really welcome seekers. We've forgotten, or maybe like some of the disciples, we never really learned the essential message of Jesus - radical, abundant, indiscriminate, extravagant, inclusive love."

### *A Reading from the Gospel of Mary of Magdala*

When the Blessed One had said these things, he greeted them all. "Peace be with you!" he said.

"Acquire my peace within yourselves!

"Be on your guard so that no one deceives you by saying, "Look over here!" or "Look over there!" For the child of true Humanity exists within you. Follow it! Those who search for it will find it.

"Go then, preac[h] the good news about the Realm. [Do] not lay down any rule beyond what I determined for you, nor promulgate law like the lawgiver, or else you might be dominated by it."

After he had said these things, he departed from them.

## Closing meditation from St. Francis

*Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.*

*Where there is hatred, let me sow love.*

*Where there is injury, pardon*

*Where there is doubt, faith*

*Where there is despair, hope*

*Where there is darkness, light*

*Where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek To be consoled as to console,*

*To be understood as to understand,*

*To be loved as to love:*

*for it is in giving that we receive,*

*It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.*

## Closing Music - *The Magdalene Mystique: Songs from Within,* c Anita Kruse, 2006

*As an expression of appreciation to The Rothko Chapel for use of this sacred space,  
your love offering in the box marked "Magdalen Community"  
will be gratefully received.*



*For more information about the Magdalen Community, please contact Bridgitt Ayers,  
<bdickey@rice.edu>. Please include "Magdalen Community" in the subject line.*