

Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, July 30, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

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

Call to Silence and Opening Meditation

Opening Dialogue

Solo: Peace Be With You.

Unison: Acquire My Peace within you.

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 Call to conversation

A Reading from One River, Many Wells, by Matthew Fox, (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2000), p. 19- 20

From the Hindu Scriptures we read: Truth is one, sages call it by different names. The Hindu mystic Rajjab writes:

*The worship of the different religions,
which are like so many small streams
move together to meet God, who is like the ocean.*

The mystical tradition of Islam, the Sufi tradition, also sees all mystical traditions as one.

Rumi says,

*All religion,
all this singing,
is one song.*

*The differences are just
illusion and vanity.*

The sun's light looks a little different on this wall than it does on that wall.... But it's still one light.

A Reading from Being Peace and Peace is Every Step, Thích Nhất Hạnh

I think that our society is a difficult place to live. If we are not careful, we can become uprooted, and once uprooted, we cannot help change society to make it more livable.

The roots of war are in the way we live our daily lives – the way we develop our industries, build up our society, and consume goods. We have to look deeply into the situation, and we will see the roots of war. We cannot just blame one side or the other. We have to transcend the tendency to take sides – that would be very helpful. We need links. We need communication. Practicing nonviolence is first of all to become nonviolence. Then when a difficult situation presents itself, we will react in a way that will help the situation. This applies to problems of the family as well as to the problems of society.

A Reading from *She Who Prays: A Woman's Interfaith Prayer Book*, Jane Richardson Jensen & Patricia Harris-Watkins

God of Mercy and Justice,
Change comes as surely as
 The night becomes day,
 Rain falls to the ground,
 And buds return in the spring.
Joy comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5).

Comfort is warm.
Security is cozy.
Both flit away as “they” prepare for War.
Wait, take time, listen, and learn.
Violence harms and alarms
 Our hearts and minds, our very souls,
 “*This fragile earth, our island home,*”
 Time and space itself.
Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10).

When drums beat to the cadence of soldiers marching off to war,
 Wondering becomes the order of the day,
 Waiting is the challenge. ...
How many mornings will we awake to hear about casualties—theirs and ours?
How many hearts will be broken?
How many families grieving?
God will wipe away every tear from their eyes (Revelation 7:17)

We are faced with living in compassionate tension.
Challenge awaits us near and far
Away—staying human while living through hell.
At home—channeling fear and anxiety into constructive endeavors.

The hands that waved a poster during a peace protest or signed a petition for peace become a sacrament of God's love by reaching out to embrace a friend in need of a different kind of peace. Then the tension between hawks and doves may be washed away in our communal tears. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4).

May it ever be so. Amen.

A Reading from The Gospel of Mary Magdalene, translation by Jean-Yves Leloup

(the Teacher is speaking) "this is why I tell you: 'Be in harmony...' If you are out of balance, take inspiration from manifestations of your true nature. Those who have ears, let them hear." After saying this, the Blessed One greeted them all saying: "Peace be with you—may my Peace arise and be fulfilled within you! Be vigilant, and allow no one to mislead you by saying: 'Here it is!' or 'There it is!' For it is within you that the Son of Man dwells. Go to him, for those who seek him, find him."

Closing Prayer

Matka, Pendo, Sakina, Tz'u, Esperanza, whether we pray in Czech, Swahili, Arabic, Chinese, or Spanish, we seek you who are Mother, Love, Presence, Compassion, and Hope. We ask for forgiveness for our part in tarnishing the Divine Image. Through these petitions, we hope for reconciliation in any relationships that have become strained or shattered through the misuse of religious belief, practice, or tradition. Be with us now as we celebrate the potential for Goodness that is unique in each faith. We also lift up those who have no faith or religion and respect their integrity.

We lift up those who follow the faiths that arose out of the Middle East: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and the Baha'i Faith. Most especially, we thank you for Judaism's belief in One God and the gift of the Torah, the core of which is, according to Micah 6:8, "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God;" for Christianity's emphasis on God as Trinity and Jesus' teachings, the core of which is to love God and to love one's neighbor; for Islam's belief in submission to Allah (The God) and its emphasis on love, forgiveness, and generosity to others as demonstrated by the prophet Muhammad; for Zoroastrianism's emphasis on personal responsibility, the worship of Ahura Mazda as the source of all that is good, the renunciation of evil, and for the prophet Zarathustra; and for the Baha'i Faith's emphasis on the spiritual unity of mankind, peace and universal education, and especially, its affirmation of the equality of women and men.

(Adapted from She Who Prays: A Woman's Interfaith Prayer Book)

Closing Dialogue

Solo: Gracious Spirit, we offer these petitions for reconciliation of the peoples of the world, acknowledging the wealth of religious diversity and cultures in our global community. We pray also for our friends, relatives, and those who claim no religion.

Unison: *Draw near to each and every one.*

Solo: In the knowledge that aspects of any religion may be taken to extremes, we pray for those whose human dignity has been diminished because of someone else's understanding of religion.

Unison: *Matka Mother, have mercy.*

Solo: We pray for those whose faith has been shaken by extremists of any kind.

Unison: *Pendo Love, have mercy.*

Solo: We pray especially for those living in areas of religious conflict.

Unison: *Sakina Presence, have mercy.*

Solo: We pray also for those who have used their faith to justify abuse of the earth.

Unison: *Tz'u Compassion, have mercy.*

Solo: We admit that, at times, we diminish the Divine Spark within through our own misunderstanding of Love.

Unison: *Esperanza Hope, have mercy.*

*(Adapted from *She Who Prays: A Woman's Interfaith Prayer Book*)*

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.