

Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, November 19, 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 Meditation and Call to Silence

This community has contemplated the sacred writings of many traditions. Our readings today are taken from the *Bhagavad Gita*, which translates to "Song of the Divine One." Sacred to many Hindus, it was originally written in Sanskrit, and historians date the text to somewhere between 500 and 50 BCE. The Song is a dialog between Lord Krishna and Arjuna, the legendary archer, on the eve of an epic battle. This battle symbolizes man's eternal inner conflict, raging between good and evil. So, too, the Gospel of Mary is a dialog. As Krishna instructs Arjuna; as Jesus instructs Mary and the other disciples, let us now move inside ourselves and find the divine light within.

Opening Greeting

Solo: Peace Be With You.

Unison: Acquire My Peace within you.

Opening Dialog

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 the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2; Verses 55-58, 61-64

The Blessed Lord said: "When a person rejects all the cravings of the mind and is satisfied with the Self alone, then such a one is stable. He whose mind is unruffled by sorrows, who thirsts not for pleasures, who is free from passion, fear and wrath – such a one is a man of secure understanding. He who is totally unattached and, facing both good and bad neither rejoices or recoils – such a one is poised in Wisdom. He who can withdraw his senses from the attractions of the phenomenal world even as the tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell – such is the one with a stable mind."

“Therefore, holding the senses and the mind in check, the Yogi should be intent on Me; for he whose senses are under control is secure in understanding. Dwelling with the mind on sense objects develops attachment; attachment leads to desire, and desire breeds anger; From anger arises delusion; delusion promotes confusion of the mind; confusion generates loss of reason; and finally, loss of reason leads to complete ruin.”

A Reading from the Gospel of Mary

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.’ I said to him, “So now, Lord, does a person who sees a vision see it <with> the soul <or> with the spirit?” The Savior answered, ‘A person does not see with the soul or with the spirit. Rather the mind, which exists between these two, sees the vision..’

“And Desire said, ‘I did not see you go down, yet now I see you go up. So why do you lie since you belong to me?’ “The soul answered, ‘I saw you. You did not see me nor did you know me. You (mis)took the garment (I wore) for my (true) self. And you did not recognize me.’

“After it had said these things, it left rejoicing greatly.

“Again, it came to the third Power, which is called ‘Ignorance.’ [It] examined the soul closely, saying, ‘Where are you going? You are bound by wickedness. Indeed you are bound! Do not judge!’

“And the soul said, ‘Why do you judge me, since I have not passed judgement? I have been bound, but I have not bound (anything). They did not recognize me, but I have recognized that the universe is to be dissolved, both the things of earth and those of heaven.’

“When the soul had brought the third Power to naught, it went upward and saw the fourth Power. It had seven forms. The first form is darkness; the second is desire; the third is ignorance; the fourth is zeal for death; the fifth is the realm of the flesh; the sixth is the foolish wisdom of the flesh; the seventh is the wisdom of the wrathful person. These are the seven Powers of Wrath.

“They interrogated the soul, ‘Where are you coming from, human-killer, and where are you going, space-conqueror?’

“The soul replied, saying, ‘What binds me has been slain, and what surrounds me has been destroyed, and my desire has been brought to an end, and ignorance has died. In a [wor]ld, I was set loose from a world [an]d in a type, from a type which is above, and (from) the chain of forgetfulness which exists in time. From this hour on, for the time of the due season of the aeon, I will receive rest i[n] silence.’ ”

A Reading from the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3; Verses 36-41

Arjuna asked: “Krishna, what is it that drives a man to sin, sometimes even against his will and as if by compulsion? The Lord replied: “It is desire and anger begotten of passion. Desire is all-devouring, and corrupts everything. It is their greatest enemy. As a flame is covered by smoke, mirror by dirt and the embryo by amnion, so is Knowledge shrouded by desire. Desire is the Wise man’s eternal foe and is like an insatiable fire. Senses, the mind and the intellect, they say, are its lurking places. Through these agents desire smothers Wisdom and deludes the embodied soul. Therefore, restrain first their senses and slay this evil thing (desire) which obstructs Knowledge and Wisdom.”

A Reading from the Gospel of Mary

Then Peter said to him, “You have been explaining every topic to us; tell us one other thing. What is the sin of the world?”

The Savior replied, “There is no such thing as sin; rather you yourselves are what produces sin when you act in accordance with the nature of adultery, which is called ‘sin.’ For this reason, the Good came among you, pursuing (the good) which belongs to every nature. It will set it within its root.”

Then he continued. He said, “This is why you get si[c]k and die: because [you love] what de[c]ei[ve]s [you]. [Anyone who] thinks should consider (these matters)!

“[Ma]tter gav[e bi]rth to a passion which has no Image because it derives from what is contrary to nature. A disturbing confusion then occurred in the whole body. That is why I told you, ‘Become content at heart, while also remaining discontent and disobedient; indeed become contented and agreeable (only) in the presence of that other Image of nature.’ Anyone with two ears capable of hearing should listen!”

Closing Dialogue

Solo: *Blessed be the Divine Teachers.*

Unison: *The Blessed Ones of Perfect Peace.*

Solo: *How do we acquire that Perfect Peace?*

Unison: *Look within!*

Solo: *Peace be with you.*

Unison: *Acquire my peace within you.*

Solo: *My Peace I leave with you.*

Unison: *My Peace I give to you.*

*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,
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