

# Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, October 21, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

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

*Yesterday. Tomorrow. She stands between.  
Mary Magdalene*

## Opening Meditation - The Path Inward into Our Own Hearts

C.S. Lewis retells the ancient pre-Christian myth of Psyche in his last book *Till We Have Faces*. The breathtakingly beautiful Psyche represents all of us - the human soul - in our journey to discover our depth within. Psyche has vision, as each of us do. She is not blocked like her sister Orual and the Greek teacher, the Fox (who represent the voices of rationalism in their culture). Psyche calls her sister and the Fox to cross over into her "soul-house" and "fair dwelling place" so that they too, might live from within. At one moment, she cries out: This is it, Orual! It is here. You are standing on the stairs of the great gate."

In much the same way, we find that the Gospel of Mary --- and the Magdalene herself --- are calling us too. We invite you this morning into your soul-house and fair dwelling place where you will find the light and the shared peace within. If you seek it, you will find it.  
(observe the silence)

## 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 close of Till We Have Faces by CS Lewis*

*[Psyche's sister finally understands the silence of the gods]*

*The complaint was the answer. To have heard myself making it was to be answered. Lightly men talk of saying what they mean. Often when he was teaching me to write in Greek the Fox would say, "Child, to say the very things you really mean, the whole of it, nothing more or less or other than what you really mean; that's the whole art and joy of words." A glib saying. When the time comes to you at which you will be forced at last to utter the speech which has lain at the center of your soul for years, which you have, all that time, idiot-like, been saying over and over, you'll not talk about joy of words. I saw well why the gods do not speak to us openly, nor let us answer. Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean? How can they meet us face to face till we have faces?*

### *A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 16:1, 5-8*

*When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him...as they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of out to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you. So they went out and fled from the tomb and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.*

### *A Reading from the Gospel of Mary Magdalene (as translated from the Coptic by Esther deBoer)*

*[When the Savior departed, Peter, Andrew, and Levi] were grieved and wept greatly, saying, "How shall we go to the nations and preach the gospel of the kingdom of the Son of Man? If they did not spare him, how will they spare us?" Then Mary stood up, embraced them all, and said to her brothers (and sisters), "Do not weep and do not grieve and do not be in two minds, for his grace will be with you and will shelter you. Rather let us praise his greatness, for he has prepared us and made us (true) Human Being." When Mary said this, she turned their hearts to the Good One, and they began to discuss the words of the [Savior].*

Peter said to Mary, Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of women. Tell us the words of the Savior which you remember, the things that you know and we do not, nor have we heard them" [And Mary tells the disciples of her vision] When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Savior had spoken with her.

Peter answered and spoke about these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: "Did he really speak with a woman without our knowledge (and) not openly? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?"

Then Mary wept and said to Peter, "My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior?" Levi answered and said to Peter, "Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her very well. That is why he loved her more than us. Rather let us be ashamed and put on the perfect [hu]man and acquire him for ourselves as he commanded us, and preach the gospel, not laying down any other rule or other law beyond what the Savior said. When [...] and they began to go forth [to] proclaim and to preach.

### ***A Commentary on The Gospel of Mary Magdalene by Jean-Yves Leloup (closing chapter)***

Among Christian writings, *The Gospel of Mary* is especially cogent as a reminder of the vastness of human potential and the meaning, beauty and demands of the human enterprise. It affirms that a human being can only be fulfilled by overcoming herself or himself, going beyond the conditioning of masculine or feminine, so as to become *Anthropos*—both *anthropocosmos* and *theanthropos*.

What might be the significance of this timing? Some would say that the *Gospel of Mary* is the missing piece that has been needed to complete the Good News in a more ecumenical sense, one that would also include and fulfill the *Torah* and the *Qur'an*. Yet the important thing is that it invites us to go even further than this, beyond the dualisms and dogmas of all organized religions. It is in this sense that we might well ask ourselves if this is not the appropriate gospel to inaugurate the third millennium.

It is this *Breath* that fills us with the vitality needed to walk forth –not toward our inevitable death, but toward that silent repose in the midst of action, where individual being is finally open to the Oneness of *Lover* and *Beloved*.

## *A Reading from Dialogue of the Savior*

*Mary said, "I want to understand all things, just as they are!"*

*The Lord said, "He who will seek out life! For this is their wealth."*

## *Closing Dialog (adapted from Rumi)*

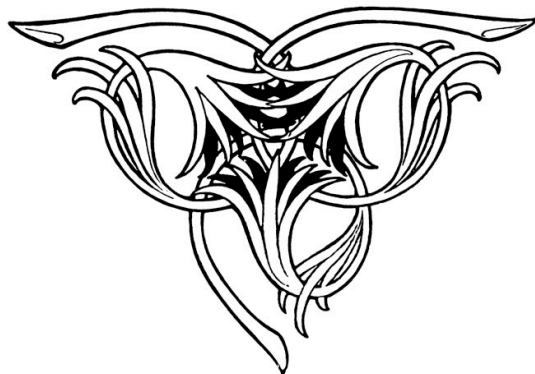
*Solo: In all the world there exists only two  
Lover and Beloved*

*Unison: Me and you.*

*Solo: When you find yourself with the Beloved,  
embracing for one breath,*

*Unison: In that moment you will find your true destiny.*

*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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