

Magdalen Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, October 22, 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.

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

Opening Meditation and Dance - Sydney "Sunshine" Strahan, Dancer

*He drew a circle that shut me out ---
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!*

("Outwitted" in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, quoted in Tracey Lind, Interrupted by God: Glimpses from the Edge. 167.)

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 Thich Nhat Hanh's Living Buddha, Living Christ (pages 1- 2)

Twenty years ago at a conference I attended of theologians and professors of religion, an Indian Christian friend told the assembly, "We are going to hear about the beauties of several traditions, but that does not mean that we are going to make a fruit salad." When it came my turn to speak, I said, "Fruit salad can be delicious! I have shared the Eucharist with Father Daniel Berrigan, and our

worship became possible because of the sufferings we Vietnamese and American shared over many years." Some of the Buddhists present were shocked to hear I had participated in the Eucharist, and many Christians seemed truly horrified. To me, religious life is life. I do not see any reason to spend one's whole life tasting just one kind of fruit. We human beings can be nourished by the best values of many traditions.

Professor Hans Kung has said, "Until there is peace between religions, there can be no peace in the world." People kill and are killed because they cling too tightly to their own beliefs and ideologies. When we believe that ours is the only faith that contains the truth, violence and suffering will surely be the result. The second precept of the Order of Interbeing, founded with the Zen Buddhist tradition during the war in Vietnam, is about letting go of views: "Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice nonattachment from views in order to be open to receive others' viewpoints." To me, this is the most essential practice of peace.

A Reading from the Gospel of Mary, Chapter 4

... Will matter then be destroyed or not? (22) The Savior said, All nature, all formations, all creatures exist in and with one another, and they will be resolved again into their own roots. (23) For the nature of matter is resolved into the roots of its own nature alone. 24) He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

(<http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>)

A Reading from the Gospel of John 15: 1- 11

(1) "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. (2) Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (3) You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you. (4) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. (5) I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (6) If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. (7) If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. (8) By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. (9) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. (10) If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (11) These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

(<http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=DIV1&byte=4926419>)

A Reading from Interrupted by God: Glimpses from the Edge, Comments by Tracey Lind (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2004)

The challenge of a life of Christian witness in an interreligious world is how to abide in Christ and share the love of God with those who belong to different vines in the vineyard. Christians are called to treat members of other faiths as neighbors with valid beliefs; to recognize the Divine Image in all people; to avoid using language and behavior that intimidates, oppresses, vilifies, demonizes, and distorts the other; and to affirm the presence and sovereign action of God among all faith communities. In a pluralistic world, Christians are called and commissioned to say, "Come, see, and taste the fruit my vines have produced," rather than "your vines are barren or your fruit is sour." Life in the global village allows us to appreciate many different varieties of fruit from God's garden and still claim the one that best feeds and nourishes us.

Closing Meditation and Dance - Sydney "Sunshine" Strahan, Dancer

*Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge.
It's too high!
Come to the edge.*

*And they came
And he pushed
And they flew.*

(Christopher Logue, quoted in Lind, xi)

*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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