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# THE MARK

A Publication of The Church of Conscious Harmony ❖ A Contemplative Christian Community



REVERDURE

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# CHOOSE THIS DAY WHAT YOU WILL FOLLOW

by Tim Cook

Our scientists are able to trace the signature of Life as an almost inconceivably continuous trail of Light, back toward the Big Bang. But even uncovering the earliest nano-moments of Creation, we see, unarguably that all possibilities of all possible forms that are ever going to be expressed were in there. Many of those possibilities have now been expressed into manifestation; but that does not mean, by any means, that all possibilities have been exhausted. All that seems “normal” today was once inconceivable. Even all that was once conceived, and yet thought to be impossible, has become the everyday ordinary environment that we hardly even notice. Life is Light and Light is Life. They are never found apart. Where Life and Light are, all things are always possible. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is impossible.

This, all-possibility Life has manifested itself through countless forms over vast expanses of time. Yet, Life Itself is, in fact, the Source of all the ever-shifting forms of Its own expression as well as the very activity of expressing all-possible activity. This very moment, the one we are now sharing, is that

One Life expressing us. Our individual consciousness and the fundamental awareness, by which we are knowing and experiencing this mysterious Life, is Life knowing Itself as our personal life. Our awareness is Its own always-present awareness. Now, here, and everywhere, there is Only God. The forms of God’s expression are always and only changing. All of them, always appear, persist for a time, then change and pass away. Yet Life Itself never passes away. The ever-changing forms are always revealing or pointing to God’s Presence, but they never contain It or diminish It.

Our Earth’s recorded geologic history, paleo-history, pre-history and cultural history reveal that Life tends to express Its possible forms in patterns of pulses or waves of influence, both very great and very small. But no matter what the form or phase of that form’s expression; there was never, ever, an absence of Life or Light. The infinitely deep and unremitting, throbbing pulse of Life is always here and has never not been here for any of God’s creatures in any epoch.

So what about me and what about you? Have we learned to remain focused on and aware

of the endless throb of the vital Life that right now lives us or is our attention stuck on and glued to life’s ever-shifting forms of expression? Form and activity are each and both immutable aspects of this and every moment of our lives. The forms rise and fall, they must always change and pass away. Life Itself, though, is always right here. Life is always-knowing all forms of experience. We are Life living Itself. It has no limits, even in us or as us.

If all of Life’s forms of expression are always and only changing, then what holds it all together? What enables Its continuity? It is Life’s nature to remain always One, even through all of Its infinite appearances and expressions because that nature is Love. Life, Light and Love are always and everywhere present. They have been forever and will be eternally. And they are ever-renewing and ever-unfolding the limitless forms of their appearance.

What that means to us is that all the changing forms of Life’s appearance abide in Love and that our entire lives and all the forms of our experience are always and only unfolding in Love. No matter what we do, no matter how we act and

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no matter what we know or don't know, we do it all in the ocean of Love that has been here since the beginning. Love loves each of us. When, even for a moment, we peel our fearful gaze away from the appearances of outer conditions, whether in our social and political world or our in our personal lives; we can look up and all around to notice the endless wonder, glory, magnificence and infinitely transformative capacity of Creation itself. That simple glance changes our personal consciousness in that very moment.

We small, but beloved, humans have been invited to participate in the unfolding evolution of Life's expression in our lives through the God-given faculty of our attention. We participate, whether we like it or not, through our attention. Our lives follow our attention. The Law of Mind Action states it simply, "Thoughts held in mind produce after their kind." I learned how literally true that is in a way that nearly cost me my life.

On my very first motorcycle ride into the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, my friend Mike, an experienced rider, and I decided to ride over the 12,000 foot Loveland Pass on the continental divide.

The narrow, steep approach to the crest of the mountain hid an unexpected sharp turn at the top and a sheer drop of thousands of feet just across the very narrow road. I tried to turn, but the bike just kept going straight toward the cliff. I somehow managed to get it stopped with just a few feet between me and the cliff of certain death, my heart pounding and legs like rubber. Mike parked his bike and ran to me, nearly hysterical, shouting,

"The bike followed your eyes! The bike always follows your eyes! You were looking where you *didn't want* to go and the bike followed your eyes. Always, only look where you *want* to go and the bike will follow your eyes." Lesson learned and never forgotten!

But it's not just with motorcycles that this principle holds true and it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that all of human life is and always has been governed by it. What gets my attention gets me. What gets your attention gets you. Socially, politically, environmentally and personally, our experiences follow our attention. Our lives follow our attention.

News reports of disastrous

and horrendous current events; environmental degradation; the peccadillos of the rich, famous and powerful; unjust and unbalanced economic appearances are all very seductively leading toward a cliff in our personal consciousness. It's not a cliff I want to fall over. Do you? We have a choice in every moment. We can notice where we **do** want to go by taking time every day to notice the grandeur and magnificence of Life and Light dancing out the story of Love's birth in our human experience. Day-by-day and bit-by-bit our daily practice of study of The Work of Inner Christianity and the silence of Centering Prayer reveals a progressive and undeniably growing Presence that is gradually giving birth to our utterly new and irreversible experience of identity with the totally trustworthy All Loving God. The ever-renewing, ever-unfolding activity of God is waiting for us to notice.

We are choosing what we'll attend to every moment of every day. We are very powerful people and our lives are following our attention. It is good to notice, praise and glorify this throbbing, pulsing Life from which nothing is impossible. Where do you want to go? 

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING INTENTIONAL TIME TO DO NOTHING

by Barbara Cook

I was recently talking with my son, Erik, about our upcoming retirement. He asked if I would miss staffing our Centering Prayer retreats, which I have had the pleasure of doing for the last 22 years. I said, “I really don’t know. I haven’t thought about it yet. But I’ll be finding out next year. I do know that I’ll miss all the opportunities to get to pray two hours a day with our community at each retreat.” One of the best benefits of retreat staffing is praying deeply and often in a community of Christ. I can’t imagine my life without that, so I am trusting God that somehow we’ll have deep time together in a different way or ways that I’ve yet to discover. God is always present; but in those hours of prayer, sitting still and waiting with God, these are the times that I know I’m present to the Beloved.

I may be a bit prejudiced, but I feel that is the most important job on the planet—to be open to transformation in Christ, willing to die to self, while in my private little universe with

all of its self-centeredness and selfishness. It is God who manifests our transformation, but it is we who can make ourselves available. Centering Prayer is a way to make ourselves open and available to that change. Centering Prayer is, like all prayer, a relationship with God. So when we sit together in silence, not doing our personal self programs; we are open to God’s presence, love and transforming grace. And, as Fr. Thomas Keating has said, that act of opening in prayer also prepares our faculties to bear the new man/woman into the world. Teilhard de Chardin said that contemplatives are the tip of the arrow in the Cosmic Genesis. Contemplation quickens our ability to be open to change and to let go of the past. This allows God to more fully enter the world and ourselves. Or to put it another way, it opens a way to let Love and Universal- or Christ-consciousness enter this world to heal and solve the problems of self-centered mankind, which we are facing now.

It is certainly a counter-

cultural choice to take time to do nothing, but open to our true Self and to the invisible God which we cannot see. And we know that we won’t be rewarded for it by the world; but all of us who practice this simple prayer, taking time to be apart in good company, doing nothing with great intention, can testify that we begin to change for the better. We know God in a deeper way and we are much more able to see His presence, in every situation and condition. Fr. Thomas calls this x-ray eyes of faith.

We do this not only for ourselves, though we do greatly benefit in freedom from the fake world of the false self. But as the contemplative arrow, we do it for the evolution of our species into the *homo spiritus* we were created to become. We are invited to embody the next step in God’s ever-evolving possibility initiated by Jesus the Christ. We go in to go out, to take what we receive and share it. Not just to have nice little comfortable lives, but as Sr. Ilia Delio says to become Christ

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# SEEDS

Every moment and every event  
of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul.

For just as the wind carries thousands of winged seeds,  
so each moment brings with it germs of spiritual vitality that come to  
rest imperceptibly in the minds and wills of men.

Most of these unnumbered seeds perish and are lost,  
because men are not prepared to receive them:  
for such seeds as these cannot spring up anywhere  
except in the good soil of freedom, spontaneity and love.

This is no new idea.

Christ in the parable of the sower long ago told us that  
"The seed is the word of God."

We often think this applies only to the word of the Gospel ...  
But every expression of the will of God is in some sense a "word" of God  
and therefore a "seed" of new life.

The ever-changing reality in the midst of which we live should awaken  
us to the possibility of an uninterrupted dialogue with God.

By this I do not mean continuous "talk,"...  
but a dialogue of love and of choice. A dialogue of deep wills.

... We must learn to realize that the love of God seeks us  
in every situation, and seeks our good.

His inscrutable love seeks our awakening.

True, since this awakening implies a kind of death to our exterior self, we  
will dread His coming in proportion

as we are identified with this exterior self and attached to it.

But when we understand the dialectic of life and death  
we will learn to take the risks implied by faith,  
to make the choices that deliver us from our routine self  
and open to us the door of a new being, a new reality.

Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, pages 14-16.

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evolvers. Our job is to simply  
play our part as contemplatives,  
quietly listening to the Holy  
Spirit's direction in that still  
small voice within.

It is a great grace to have a  
community that values silent

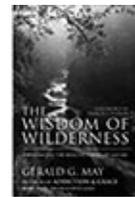
prayer and to know that there  
are others all around the world  
that share the same vocation  
of opening to the Divine and  
to becoming the Divine just as  
Christ called us to. The rest  
will unfold as we say yes. ☺

## CCH BOOKSTORE

### SUGGESTED TITLES FOR JULY



*Care for Creation*  
*A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth*  
by Ilia Delio, Keith Warner,  
and Pamela Wood



*The Wisdom of the Wilderness*  
*Experiencing the Healing Power of Nature*  
by Gerald May



*The Hidden Life of Trees*  
*What They Feel, How They Communicate*  
by Peter Wohlleben



*The More Beautiful World Our Hearts  
Know Is Possible*  
by Charles Eisenstein

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Bookstore and Library Hours  
Open Monday-Friday 9 am-4 pm  
Sunday 9:30-10 am & 11:30 am-noon



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*I find joy in Your testimonies ... Glory to God forever!* Psalm 119:14

## ANNUAL AIM: REVERDURE

### YOU CAN KNOW GOD AND KNOW THAT YOU KNOW

by Cynthia de la Cruz

*Reverdure is a French word  
for restoring the life of a natural area,  
to become green with growth again,  
to recover, to heal. ...*

*In short, reverdurance means  
enduring with reverence.*

*Each day I wake up,  
I am challenged to affirm the Life  
of a world that obscures it,  
a world that seems to deny its own life.*

*My actions feel so small,  
like desperately opening windows or  
doors to let the breeze be felt by others  
who prefer artificial air;  
it is such a fleeting small act,  
hardly heroism. ...*

*Reform is just a ticket for  
another ride at the amusement park;  
revolution merely changes  
the park's theme.*

*What we need is Resumption.  
Enough reverdurance to resume  
our living lives, to rediscover the life  
of the world that has gone out of it,  
to replant our roots  
in the healing silence.*

Gray Matthews, 'Reverdurance in the Wind,'  
*We Are Already One, Thomas Merton's Message of Hope*

Feeling serene and hopeful, as I often do after church, I never seem to tire of hearing how we are all One. Driving home through the brushy hills of west Austin, I see grey clouds hanging low and heavy. They remind me of a sky I looked at 30 years ago while driving home from work.

Heavy, grey clouds rolled across the sky like waves over an upside-down ocean. It was during a time of turbulent soul searching. For months, I had been seeking a spiritual path inspired by a book I read in high school called "The Religions of Man" and by my 10th grade science teacher who "hinted" that divine intervention was part of the evolutionary plan. But finding a spiritual path that viewed all religions and science as equal proved to be difficult. This

burning curiosity to understand my purpose in life was met with defeat and hopelessness, which would culminate into a single question. On that drive home from work my frustration became unbearable. I looked at that grey sky and said out loud with an indignant tone, "Fine God, if I'm supposed to believe in you with blind faith, then tell me why! Why do I have to believe in you with blind faith?" An inner voice answered instantly and calmly. "You don't, you can know God and know that you know." I felt stunned. I thought, "What the heck does that mean?" That was not the answer I expected. In fact, I didn't expect an answer at all. I was just venting. Was it my personality talking? Was my higher self, my soul, my essence sending the message? Or was God Himself

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answering me? Did it matter? Not to me. I asked the question and the answer came. Now with more determination than ever, I put my oar in the water and set the course to find my spiritual path.

Two weeks later, I had a spiritual conversation with a coworker. She invited me to The Christ Center, a meditation school that taught Kriya Yoga, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and metaphysics. Perfect! I sat in the back row and watched a video of the founder, Audle Allison teach the fundamentals of meditation. He was an elderly bald man, a westerner, who in his early years studied under several gurus like, Yogananda, Ram Dass, and Babaji. Their photographs hung above mini shrines. I felt excited, yet apprehensive, praying it wasn't a cult. Then I heard Audle say, "Through meditation, you can know God and know that you know." What? Did he just say that? Stunned, I turned to my coworker and was barely able to repeat the words. She responded casually, "Oh yeah, he's said that several times."

Was this synchronicity? Or was it a moment of being consciously connected to the Oneness? I call it being in the God Zone. I laughed at the thought of God dropping a brick on my head to affirm His presence.

### **Verdure – freshness and vigor**

And so, my spiritual journey began with a new understanding of my relationship with God. One that I could relate to. I could barely contain my verdure and eagerness to share **everything** I was learning with everyone, including a stranger in a nightclub! Although it was hard to tell if his glazed-over look was from alcohol or my explanation of the chakras.

The Christ Center taught me the parallels between Eastern and Western religions. Before then I had an aversion to the Bible and to "organized" religion for its hypocrisy. A literal interpretation of scripture conflicted with my intuition. But when explained metaphysically and contemplatively, Jesus' message opened a door to a deeper understanding of Self and God. The retreats quickened my spirit and helped me to move deeper into the restoring silence. And as promised, through daily meditation, I grew closer to God.

After years of meditating, during a retreat I experienced being One with God. I can never fully describe the magnitude of how I blended with the breath of God. For a few moments, my consciousness was One with the entire universe, exhaling to infinity, into absolute stillness, then inhaling into a single energetic

atom. But as soon as I felt the thrill of being without flesh and bone, in a nanosecond my consciousness snapped back into my body. I have never experienced anything like that since. Did I truly experience the breath of God consciousness? Or was it my imagination? Was it just my nervous system firing at high intensity? Or did I reach a Sushumna state achieved through Kriya Pranayama, known as the Breath of God? Did it matter? Not to me, for in that moment I came to know God. And I know that I know.

For me, being in the God Zone are those moments of Oneness, or feeling connected with God. It may be in a split second, or an interaction with a person, with nature, with art, or while meditating. I learned if I reverently kept my attention on God, or Father as I sometimes like to call Him, He could do miraculous work through me. Like the time He kept my Aunt Bobbie from taking her life. Every summer as a child I looked forward to visiting her. She laughed easily and everyone felt her zest for life. But over time, the demons from her past would haunt her. Forced by her parents to give up her child as an unwed teenager, she later came to use alcohol to deaden the remorse she felt by her loss. During this time, I was meditating daily

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and learning unconditional love. I would ask Father to make me His instrument, to flow through and from me. One day, I wrote my aunt a letter telling her how much I loved her and how beautiful she was. I knew she was suffering. I asked Father to help me with the words. Unbeknownst to me, the letter arrived on the day she planned to commit suicide. While the loaded gun sat on the kitchen table, she felt an odd urge to check her mailbox. Years later she shared this story with me and her tears poured out then, just as they had when she first read the divine letter. She lived for many years afterwards, and before she died she made peace with herself, her family, and with God.

Of all the fascinating correlations I discovered between man, God, and science, the most essential lesson I learned, and I'm still learning, are the six fundamental attributes to living a Christ-like life, to be: of service, impersonal (no-self), nonjudgmental (nonidentify), grateful, forgiving, and to love unconditionally. Focusing on these six attributes became my guide. But my spiritual path did not unfold in the blissful, reverent way I thought it would. Instead, I walked away from the path that gave me direction. I quit following the teachings that offered spiritual growth. And I quit meditating and

disconnected myself from God. In time, I learned why I walked away.

### **Endure**

For the next 15 years, I learned what is meant by hell and damnation. Hell was my life without God. Damnation was my disconnection from God. The violence in the world was no different than the violence within me, that of anger, blame, denial, lack, fear, and sadness. I ignored my guru's teaching; the negativity you perceive in others is a reflection of your own negativity. Instead, I blamed my partner for what was lacking in my life. I grew unhappier with each passing year. The habitual mental chatter of self-righteousness left me incapable of loving unconditionally. We can now admit that we both contributed to the demise of our marriage. But it wasn't until I succumbed and put my freewill in God's hands that I was able to "truly" forgive him and myself.

Until then I swam aimlessly in that upside-down ocean of mental turbulence. One day I visited my chiropractor of 20 years. After my treatment, Dr. Casebolt asked, "Is there anything else bothering you?" He sensed my internal struggle. Knowing he was also a Shaman healer, I said "yes" but withdrew. He knew I used to meditate and

asked me if I would like to do a visual therapeutic meditation. I said, "yes." As I closed my eyes he asked me to choose a peaceful place. I chose the ocean. It had proven to be a place of healing for me. He asked me to create a vivid image of the ocean using all my senses. I heard seagulls calling over-head, smelled fish, tasted the salty air and felt my cool wet feet sinking deeper into the soft sand after each tiny wave retreated. He said, "There's a person walking towards you." At first, I thought it was Audle, as he too was bald. But he wasn't dressed like Audle. Instead, he wore khaki pants and a blue crew neck sweater. When this stranger stood in front of me Casebolt said, "Now ask him your question." I hadn't prepared a question, but without delay my inner voice asked, "How can I be happy?" The man said with a smile that illuminated his entire face, "Follow me" and waved me in his direction.

### **Reverdure—to restore, recover, heal**

About a month later, revedured and revitalized with a hunger for God and the search for eternal happiness, I had a spiritual conversation with a friend. She said "You should come to this church I started going to. I think it's what you're looking for." The next Sunday I entered her church and sat in the back row. Sandalwood incense

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## GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE, GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Fr. Thomas Keating, in his seminal work  
*Open Mind, Open Heart,*

lists 42 principles underlying the Christian spiritual journey.

Fr. Keating asks that these principles be read according  
to the method of Lectio Divina.

One principle will appear in these pages each month.

### 35<sup>TH</sup> GUIDELINE

Humility is an attitude of honesty  
with God, oneself, and all reality.

It enables us to be at peace  
in the presence of our powerlessness  
and to rest in the forgetfulness of self.

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triggered memories of retreats long forgotten. Chant music induced a familiar response to calm my mind and body. Then a song I hadn't heard before brought tears of joy and release as I felt God's unconditional love flow through me. When the song ended, I dried my eyes and watched in astonishment as a bald man walk onto the stage. He wore khaki pants and blue crew neck sweater and said with a smile that illuminated his entire face, "Let's stand and sing." Do His wonders ever cease?

A few weeks later Tim Cook, the man with the illuminating smile, my new teacher, was on fire talking about our relationship with God. And then he said, "You can know God and know that you know." Yes, he said

that! I had come home.

### **Resumption – beginning again**

Faith with knowing led me back to resume my spiritual journey. Faith with understanding came by way of The Church of Conscious Harmony and its master teachings. For the first two months, I cried tears of gratitude when I heard *Pie Jesu* each Sunday morning and whenever I sat with God in the divine silence of Centering Prayer or meditation. In those growing and healing moments, my heart opens and God's love pours in, reassuring me He has never left my side and that happiness is always within me, in each ever-unfolding moment. ☸



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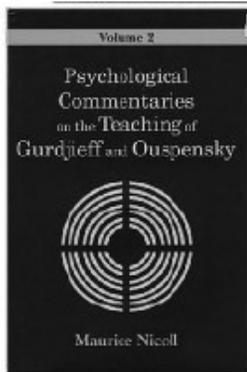
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*My Father is still working, and I also am working.* John 5:17

## THE WORK *OF INNER CHRISTIANITY*

### ESSENCE AND PERSONALITY

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In order to make the Work internal so that it begins to work in you, it is necessary to think about one or another of the great ideas of the Work. As you notice, we are always speaking of this on one occasion or another. Understanding is the most powerful force that we can make in ourselves. But if you simply hear the Work-ideas and do not try to understand them, no inner connections can be made between yourself as you are and Higher Centres. ... We are all down here to develop something in us which life does not develop. Here you are tangled up with the world and its affairs and perhaps with success, but this does not belong to the teaching of the Work about self-development. Life develops the Personality, but not Essence. The part of a man that can grow (in the Work-sense) is

the Essence. ... Essence is what is really you, what you were born with, and if that is not developed, whatever you may be in life does not compensate for lack of growth of your Essence in you. ...

Now the secret of this Work is that Essence can only grow through becoming more and more conscious of Personality and slowly and gradually seeing what Personality is in you. Therefore the Work teaches that we must observe Personality, become more conscious of it, because if you are not conscious of anything in yourself you cannot separate from it. One special thing we have to start with in self-observation is to try to observe False Personality, which is never you. ... because unless you observe yourself and become conscious of what you are like you cannot change anything, you have to observe what is not

you, your Personality, or, shall we say, your False Personality. Here you are giving yourself airs. Is that really you? You dress in different parts in life, but are you sure this is you? So it is necessary to get behind these dressed up 'I's, because Essence can only grow from truth. I am not saying that everything in Personality, the acquired side of you, is false, but a great deal is. If you are a real craftsman it will nourish Essence. ... Let me repeat once more: all this Work from this point of view is to make Essence grow through becoming more and more conscious of Personality and seeing it is not me, not I. Can this be done in life? Yes, the Work says it can be done in life if you absorb and begin to understand what the Work teaches. So many people are unhappy because of a false idea of themselves

## MULTI-DAY CENTERING PRAYER RETREATS

“With Divine guidance, I gained the courage to venture into the labyrinth of my soul, in hopes to discover the source of my unforgiving heart.

“With each prayer period, I listened more deeply, and with greater intention, to the silent voice that beckoned me closer into the sacred heart. There in the Presence, my soul was healed and transformed anew.” ~Cynthia D.

Aug 12-13	2-day	\$100
Aug 14-23	10-day	\$725*
Sept 15-20	6-day	\$495**
Oct 15-16	2-day	\$100
Dec 1-7	7-day Advent	\$625**

2-day commuter retreats at CCH include meals (sleep at home).

\*Double room occupancy rates at Cedarbrake Retreat and Renewal Center.

\*\*Single rooms available for an extra \$15/night on a first-to-register basis.

Contact the office for further information and registration.

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derived especially from False Personality. They keep on bolstering up something that is not really them. So they invent themselves and they do not correspond internally with what they invent about themselves.

Now let us return to the idea that we must meditate on and try to understand, instead of simply knowing that Man is made a self-developing organism and that for that reason he must make False Personality passive so that Essence can grow. Then you have a reversal that can take place inside, not suddenly

but gradually, in which you disbelieve your idea of yourself through observation of yourself, and then something starts in you to grow which cannot grow through external life, but only through interior meaning. If you are really good at anything, apart from False Personality, it will nourish Essence, but if it is mixed up with False Personality it will not, because it will be full of lies. **LIES KILL ESSENCE.** ☺

Maurice Nicoll, Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, pages 1471-1472. For more information and experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the Work of Inner Christianity class held Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. at The Church of Conscious Harmony.

## JULY CALENDAR

Visit [consciousharmony.org](http://consciousharmony.org)  
for a complete listing of events

### SPECIAL EVENTS

HALF-DAY CENTERING PRAYER RETREAT  
July 15 8:30 am-12:30 pm  
\$10 No need to pre-register.

Intro to Centering Prayer  
July 22 8:30 am-3:15 pm  
+ 6 Th evenings 6-7:20 pm  
\$75 Lunch included July 22.  
Preregister in the office.

### MONTHLY

1st Sundays  
Bring non-perishables for Caritas

Gurdjieff Music  
July 18 7:30-8:30 pm

### WEEKLY

Sundays  
Lectio Divina 8-9 am  
Worship Service 10-11:30 am  
Youth Program 10-11:30 am  
Fellowship 11:30 am

Wednesdays  
Prayer Circle 10:15-11 am  
Contemplative Lunch noon-1 pm  
Contemplative Communion Service 6-7 pm  
Yoga 7:30 pm-8:30 pm \$10

Thursdays 7:30-9 pm  
Work of Inner Christianity Class

Fridays 7:30-8:45 pm  
Devotional Service

### DAILY

Mondays-Fridays 7-7:35 am  
Centering Prayer Service in Theosis Chapel

Recordings of services are available  
through the Bookstore and online at  
[www.consciousharmony.org](http://www.consciousharmony.org)



THE CHURCH *of* CONSCIOUS HARMONY

A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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## THE KINGDOM OF GOD



*What is the Kingdom of God like?*

*To what can I compare it?*

Luke 13:18

In many parables,  
Jesus presents the Kingdom of God as a process of growth,  
both human and Divine.  
Special environments are required for special kinds of growth.  
Contemplation is a sign of significant growth in the Kingdom of God.  
The proper environment for developing contemplation  
is a Christian community gathered together to listen to the word of God.  
Contemplation is the deepest level of listening to the word of God.

The community is the gathering of the faithful in a particular location  
to hear the word of God, to share the Eucharist  
and to make the presence of Christ perceptible through the hospitality,  
compassion and contemplative prayer of its members.  
Monasteries first came into existence when parishes no longer provided  
an adequate environment to achieve these objectives.  
The spirituality of a church community needs to be renewed in our time.  
Monasteries are few while the hunger for a deeper life and prayer  
and a structure to support it goes on increasing ...

The Christian religion is a life to be lived,  
a relationship with God to be developed and enjoyed.

Thomas Keating, *(Introduction) 1012 Monastery Road*

