

September 2018
Volume 30
Number 9



THE MARK

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



CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE

HUMILITY SERVES

BY PETER HAAS

Humility is a significant part of what enables us to serve others. When humility is absent, service can often devolve into seeking credit or expecting something in return for our efforts. Even more beguiling is when service flows from a sense of false humility. Like fool's gold, false humility only ends up disappointing. Authentic, vulnerable humility can help us stay free and clear of all sorts of self entanglements.

An honest review of our past will reveal that humility is foundational for peace in all our relationships, family, work and community life. When humility is missing from the equation, things can quickly get out of balance. For instance, without humility, we often lose the wider perspective of others and zoom in only on our self.

Humility can be a diffuse concept. Like other words such as love and kindness, humility requires specific definition, lest it remain theoretical and not practical. Specificity is one reason why St. Benedict focuses an entire chapter on the twelve steps of humility in his influential and enduring *Rule of St. Benedict*, a rule of life that has guided monastic

communities since 529 CE, in an unbroken lineage of practicing humility to this very moment.

To support our intention for contemplative service this month, here's an interpretation of just five of Benedict's twelve levels of humility, interpreted through the ideas of the Work of Inner Christianity and the contemplative dimension of the Gospel.

The First Step of Humility: The Fear of God

The fear of God is an older way of saying *reverent verticality* – what the Work calls Self-Remembering in the light of the Ray of Creation, and Self-Remembering in Christ. That is to say, we serve “under” and “within” a greater field of consciousness; a reality bigger than our self, and all of its complex motivations and interests. Humility is gratefully acknowledging our contingency and connectivity to the larger system within which we live, move and have our being. In short, humility is a willingness to look *up*, not just looking *out toward* others, and certainly not *down at* others. Humility remembers that in relationship to Spirit, we are *all* at the same level. We are *all looking*

up in every direction to Source.

The Second Step of Humility: Not My Will, But Yours O Lord

Deeply related to the ray of creation, this second step of humility connects with the invitation to consent to something beyond ourselves. This helps us move toward service to others even when aspects of our personality may have no rational interest in serving others. Humility is recognizing that we need God's and other's help, and having the humility to then ask for it. It's also giving thanks when that help or service shows up, even when it may look different from what we wanted or expected.

The Fourth Step of Humility: Embrace Suffering Patiently and Obediently

It's normal for humans to seek to avoid suffering. So, Benedict's invitation to embrace suffering makes no sense without humility. To embrace suffering patiently and obediently is even more incomprehensible without the virtue and mindset of humility!

Humility enables us to embrace suffering patiently and obediently

because humility helps us surrender our self to be transformed through suffering, not just defend or protect our self *from* suffering. Humility helps us bear the unpleasant manifestations of others, and not seek revenge or retribution. Thus, humility is also a doorway to the power of forgiveness. One aspect of forgiveness is letting go of all hope of a different past or present.

The Sixth Step of Humility: Content Yourself with Lowliness

Paradoxically, the spiritual journey isn't an ascent to higher and higher consciousness. It's an ascent to the depths – a deeper and deeper release and diminishment of self through service. This diminishment has a way of softening our edges and slowly removes our demands and preferences. If the Great Way is easy for those without preferences, humility is the way we can lose our preferences.

Another way of interpreting lowliness is emptiness. I love the unofficial motto of the monks at New Melleray Abbey in Peosta, Iowa. I learned there from Fr. Brennan that the New Melleray monks translate the famous passage “be still and know” recorded in

Psalm 46.10 as “be empty and see.”

Humility helps us be emptied, and become content with our own emptiness. When we are empty, we can see more clearly. We can see God, our self and others with less distortion. We become pure of heart. Recall that Jesus taught that *blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God* (Matthew 5.8). Humility therefore is the key to seeing God everywhere in everyone and in every situation.

Many of us are discovering on the spiritual journey that *what* we are being emptied of is our self. In its place, we are filled with the fruit and gifts of the Spirit. And in that wonderful exchange, there emerges less of me and you, and more of Christ – who demonstrated the power of the Lowly Way – and the grace of an emptiness that leads to fullness.

This sixth step of humility may have the most practical implications for us in our consumer-based economy. Perhaps humility means for us today *not* buying, *not* eating, *not* consuming all (or as much of) that we want, whenever we want it. Perhaps this level of humility helps us remember that what we take for our self is simultaneously being

taken from somewhere else in the system. Our food is taken from the earth, oftentimes from animal life forms. Our comforts of clean water, heat, air conditioning, motorized travel, all take resources from the earth. The motivation isn't fear of scarcity. The motivation is learning contentment through emptiness. Perhaps humility means giving what you can “rightfully” have, to someone else who never thought they could have it. This is a kind of deep, spiritual stewardship of the earth and our brothers and sisters, grounded in humility.

The Ninth Step of Humility: Silence and Solitude

As a culture, we are rooted in the right to free-speech. We are a wordy people. The contemplative invitation through the ninth step of humility is to re-discover God's first word: silence. This becomes very practical in conversation with others, especially political conversation. Humility might look like *not* responding. Holding your silence versus asserting your views or pontifications of your take on things – how they are, how they are not, and how they should be, according to your view.

True, words are necessary and very empowering. But words also keep us full of our self. Silence helps train us in the art of humility in relationship to others, especially those we may disagree with. Silence and solitude help form us in the way of humility. Retreats are one of the most effective ways of integrating more silence and solitude into our life. On retreat, we learn the way of silence and solitude in community, and this retreat training strengthens us to integrate more silence and solitude when we are at home. Silence and solitude, and the practices of Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina, yoga or meditative walks, all nurture a reservoir of humility that empowers contemplative service to others.

If you wish to expand your energy in service to others – in your family, at your work, to your community, in the world, there is nothing quite as energizing than giving yourself the gift of silence and solitude. In fact, perhaps the natural end of all spiritual practice, including silence and solitude, is to be spent energetically in giving love, kindness and care to others. Teilhard de Chardin calls this kind of love Radial Energy – and it is just this kind of energy that moves outward, in a joyful flow of self-giving, transforming every unique particle into the humble light wave of Christ. ☉

WELCOME NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR

Billie Woods has been called to serve as our new Music Director. Billie has been a long-time member of the church and a frequent contributor to our musical offerings. She was also a dear friend to Susan Boulden, our former Music Director. Since Susan's sudden death in January, we have all been on a journey together – remembering, waiting and discerning new possibilities. Billie, along with the other music team members, will help us continue to honor the past and move forward into the future with grace. In addition to being an accomplished musician and pianist, Billie radiates goodness and peace. Billie begins her formal role on September 1st. Please warmly welcome her!

COMMUNITY READING

FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

THE WORK: ESOTERICISM AND CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY
BY REBECCA NOTTINGHAM

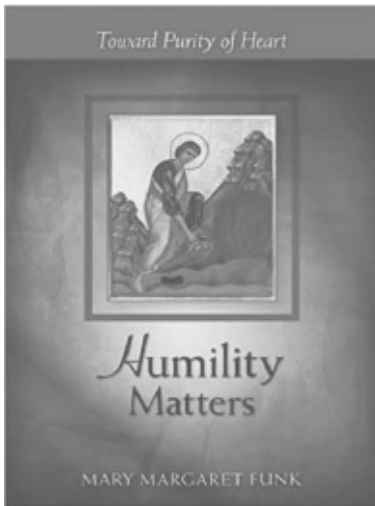
Rebecca Nottingham's new book is an insightful and practical exploration of Work ideas through the lens of the contemplative Christian journey. Her book is one of the most accessible introductions to the Work since Maurice Nicoll's book *Simple Explanation of Work Ideas*.

UPCOMING SUNDAY SERMON TEACHING THEMES

September 9	Evolving as Christ in Trust
September 16	Evolving as Christ in Humility
September 23	Evolving as Christ in Teachableness
September 30	Evolving as Christ in Kindness

CCH BOOKSTORE

SUGGESTED TITLES FOR SEPTEMBER CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE



Book Look

HUMILITY MATTERS

Mary Margaret Funk's book *Humility Matters: Toward Purity of Heart* is one of five books in "The Matters Series." The series is intended to recover early monastic teachings for contemporary contemplatives. It is a terrific and accessible resource, full of wisdom and practical ideas for supporting our spiritual journey.

In the series, especially in *Humility Matters*, Funk distills a vast amount of spiritual and monastic wisdom and literature into bite-size morsels. You will benefit greatly from reading these books, and will likely return to them often for insight, teaching and encouragement.

A hidden gem in the book *Humility Matters* is the foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. For example, he concludes the foreword remembering a passage from an ancient Tibetan text called *The Eight Verses for Training the Mind* that the Dalai Lama learned as a boy:

"Whenever I am in the company of others, may I regard myself as inferior to all. And, from the depths of my heart, cherish others as supreme. In all my actions may I watch my mind, and as soon as disturbing emotions arise, may I forcefully stop them at once, since they will hurt both me and others."

In terms of the Work of Inner Christianity, that sounds much like "external considering." Another valuable aspect of the book is Funk's imaginative conversations with three saints of the spiritual life: Teresa of Avila, Theresa of Lisieux and John Cassian. These three chapters bring the wisdom of these monastic luminaries to life for our current context.

Humility Matters is not just about humility. It's about the wider spiritual practices that help form a life more Christlike. In this way, it bears witness to how the monastic desert tradition was a seed bed of ideas that helped early Christians "work on themselves." Even a cursory reading will reveal significant connection points with our 21st century expression of the great Work of Inner Christianity, which continues to evolve in our era and in our community.

The Matters Series also includes: *Discernment Matters*, *Lectio Matters*, *Thoughts Matter*, and *Tools Matter*.



Come of Age
The Case for Elderhood
in a Time of Trouble
by Stephen Jenkinson



Contemplative Service
40 Day Practice
by Contemplative Life Program

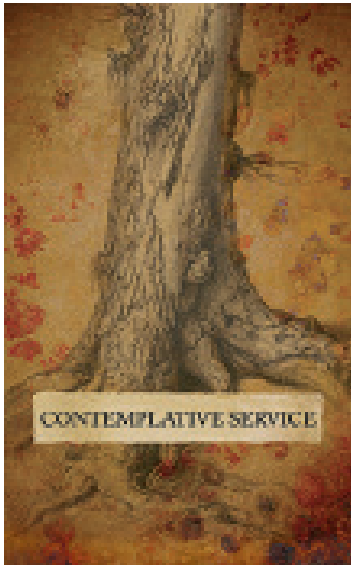


Radical Hospitality
Benedict's Way of Love
by Lonni C. Pratt with
Fr. Daniel Homan, OSB



Saint Francis of Assisi
Brother of Creation
by Mirabai Starr

BOOKSTORE AND LIBRARY HOURS
Monday-Friday
9:00 am-4:00 pm
Sunday
One half hour before and after service.



In Your light, we see light. Psalm 36:10

ANNUAL AIM: EVOLVING AS CHRIST

CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE BY BRITT PASLOSKE

Jesus emphasized servant leadership to his apostles over and over again. He made it clear that a real leader is the servant of all. Whatever we do for others is not to fix them which presumes we know how to fix them and that we are coming from a superior position. We ... serve others as a privilege because they are members of the human family ... Christ's Mystical Body, which is being transformed into God and in whom God dwells. ... If that attitude is really interiorized, then helping other people and fixing situations would change into serving other people and allowing ... God to heal the situations that are impossible for us to deal with. ... By making oneself a servant of everyone, the divine healing and redemptive work of Christ can flow through us without our getting in the way. Servant leadership leads to gratitude.

Thomas Keating, *God is Love: The Heart of All Creation*

On the human plane,
the greatest reward goes to the one who commands.
In esotericism, on the contrary,
it goes to the one who knows how best to serve.

Boris Mouravieff, *Gnosis I*

I have a secret and I want to share it with you. But first, some background.

When I was asked to write this article on Contemplative Service, I found it ironic. I would not describe myself as a service-oriented person. For most of my life, and even now, I hesitate to serve and to give of myself. My first response is to hold back. Why should I be writing on this topic? Perhaps it's *because* I have been challenged to serve that I have been interested in this subject and have done a lot of reading, thinking, and praying about contemplative service over the years. This request

offered me the opportunity to review my ideas and learn about new ones. I have been blessed by this exercise.

What is contemplative service?

There are many definitions for "contemplative." The one I like is "Focusing one's life on God through prayer, living in love and an awareness of God's presence." (Martha Ainsworth) In other words, a contemplative is someone who has a strong relationship with God. Thus, for me, Contemplative Service is service motivated and informed by my relationship with God. So the key factor is to develop

my relationship with God.

How do I do this?

The Church of Conscious Harmony focuses on strengthening our relationship with God and with others. Our Church is rich with programs, practices, and people who support one another. I began attending CCH in 2010. My wife and I had been seeking something more spiritually fulfilling and CCH met this need. In keeping with my personality, I held back at first. But over the years, I have added to my daily practices.

From the start, I regularly attended the Sunday services. Then somebody mentioned a writer named Tony de Mello. I read his book *Awareness* and was exposed to a whole new way of thinking. It was the pivotal paradigm shift for me and was the hook that kept me coming back to learn more. In 2012, I began my daily Centering Prayer practice, which had another major impact on me. I did not notice its effect at first, but my son, whom I had not seen for a few months, told me I had changed, that I was calmer. (This experience is a clue to my secret!)

In addition to practicing Centering Prayer, I began reading the scriptures and learned about *Lectio Divina*. I participated in Work groups where we study

a specific book. I took the introductory class to the Work of Inner Christianity and then began attending Work classes on Thursday nights. My wife wanted to join Seva*. My first reaction was “Let me think about it.” Did I really want to get up so early and spend all morning at the church on a Sunday? I reluctantly agreed, and was surprised to discover the peace I felt on those mornings. Last year, I became a member of the church. At the start of this year, I was paired with a Work Partner, I attended my first 5-day Centering Prayer retreat and I began to lead a Seva team.

This incremental approach has changed my life over the last eight years. I am much more focused on God. I am consciously praying, loving, and increasing my awareness.

Am I serving or helping?

In our Seva teams at CCH, we strive to “serve” as opposed to “help.” I will try to make the distinction between the two.

Tony de Mello, whom I mentioned earlier, sharpened my understand of helping versus serving. He defines service by describing what it is not – helping – rather than by what it is – serving. He describes two types of helping. The first type of helping is pleasing myself by helping others. When I

help, I do things for others because I want to get a good feeling about myself. It’s a two way street. Somebody gets help and I feel good. The second type of helping is to do things for others so I will not feel guilty, or to not appear selfish or grudging toward others. Neither of these types of helping aligns with serving.

The difference between helping and serving is subtle – the tools of the Work of Inner Christianity have been critical to my discernment. When I observe that I am helping, I ask myself if I am identified with the help that I am providing. Am I seeking pleasure from helping somebody, or am I trying to alleviate guilt? It’s more often the latter for me. I help because I think I should, and I feel guilty if I do not, especially if I know that I am being watched. This was the case when I initially joined Seva, and later when I became a team leader. My first reaction was to say no, but there was a sense of obligation nudging me towards a yes.

Another way I can discover if I am helping rather than serving is to ask myself if I am keeping accounts. Do I look into the past to see if the person I plan to help has ever helped me? After I help someone, do I think that they owe me? Alternatively, do I feel as though I owe the other person? Am

I feeling guilty, wanting to remove the debt? Will I not take help from anybody because I owe everyone? Again, non-critical self-observation helps to guide me.

Richard Rohr writes that an act of love (service) is its own reward and needs nothing in return. An act of help expects something in return. I find myself checking my ledger when somebody first asks me to help them. When we gift during CCH services, we state, “we give freely and receive joyfully.” I see that it is important for both to happen. One cannot occur without the other.

In our current political climate, many want to do what they can to make changes to the injustices that they see. Many feel angry and driven to do something to help. There are Christian scholars who highlight the challenges of this type of help. It is easy to make an enemy of those who support another point of view. This is a very strong form of attachment. Sister Simone Campbell (the nun on the bus) says,

“I find that our position ‘for the 100%’ requires an empathy that stretches my being beyond my imagining. Finding a way to not vilify or divide into ‘them’ and ‘us’ in today’s federal politics goes against ... current custom ... So my contemplative practice is to attempt to sit open-handed

and listen to the ‘wee small voice’ that sometimes whispers ideas and ways forward.”

True service involves loving everyone, the 100%, and that is very challenging.

To this point, I have described what service is not. Then what *is* service? The mystery or the “secret” is that I may not know when I am serving. If I am not getting a jolt of pleasure or trying to avoid bad feelings, then how do I know that I am serving? Two gospel passages point the way for me:

...when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matthew 6:3)

I was hungry, and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink... the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’ (Matthew 25:35, 37)

In these passages, the act of serving is kept secret from the server. True acts of loving service are hidden because the server is not dwelling on them with any emotional charge, positive or negative. But if service is an unaware act, how will I know that

I have served rather than helped? It could get very frustrating because I am a goal-oriented person. How will I know?

What’s the secret?

What I am coming to understand is that I can give up my need to see my service. By living my daily practices, I am serving. I am beginning to trust that transformation is surely happening. It is about the process and not the outcome. Sometimes I get a hint that I am transforming when someone brings it to my attention, like my son did. Sometimes I observe a positive attitude shift about a person. Sometimes I simply feel joy. Sometimes I just feel loving to everyone. These glimpses lead me to trust that I have a secret life that is simply serving God.

Grace has been flowing since I began my practices and I am grateful. My prayer is that I have the will to continue my daily practices and to trust in the process. God will take care of the rest. ☺

*Seva (pronounced say vah) is a Sanskrit word for the spiritual practice of selfless service. It is the practice of offering work with love, without expectation of reward. Seva is one of the simplest and yet most profound, life changing ways that we can put our spiritual understanding into action. Each Sunday, every five weeks, a rotating team of participants prepares the church for the Sunday services and offers a free, homemade breakfast for the community.

CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE: PARTICIPATE, SERVE, GROW, TRANSFORM

A commitment to “selfless service” has been a foundational aspect of this community since its inception 30 years ago. Fr. Thomas Keating underscores the need for service, describing the spiritual journey as a river, with the banks consisting of devotion on one side and service on the other. He says in *Open Mind, Open Heart*,

“Dedication to God is developed by commitment to one’s spiritual practices for God’s sake. Service to others is the outgoing movement of the heart promoted by compassion. It neutralizes the deep-rooted tendency to become preoccupied with our own spiritual journey and how we are doing. The habit of service to others is developed by trying to please God in what we do and by exercising compassion for others, beginning with those with whom we live. To accept everyone unconditionally is to fulfill the commandment to *love your neighbor as yourself* (Mark 12:31).”

Service is devotion ... a manifest form of love of God.

In committing to some form of service – whether it is joining a Sunday seva team, participating in Saturday community workdays, assisting the youth program, serving retreats, assisting in the bookstore, running the sound system, creating floral arrangements, or any number of the church’s service opportunities – over time, through effort, wish and grace, participation in selfless service opens us to “give freely” and to practice stewardship for our church, for our community and for others. Self-love transforms to self-less service and becomes a form of devotion, a choice-less choice, a way of deepening our relationship with the living Christ. The invitation is not to work hard and do tasks perfectly; rather the aim is *ora et labora* – the union of work and prayer, of awakening to the reality of God’s presence in all that we do, in everyone we meet and in all that we are. Through practice with the simple and ordinary, we can then be called by the Spirit into greater and greater participation. The Spirit knows what to do with each “yes” we offer. ☸

If you are interested in volunteering and experiencing contemplative service, please contact the church.



**THE CHURCH of
CONSCIOUS HARMONY**
A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

7406 Newhall Lane
Austin, Texas 78746
512.347.9673 512.347.9675 fax
www.consciousharmony.org

MINISTER
Peter Haas
minister@consciousharmony.org

Tim and Barbara Cook
Ministers Emeritus

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Begeman
Pamela Begeman
Mary Anne Best
Eric DeJernett
Ken Ely
Donald Genung
Jim McCune
Lauri Raymond

MUSIC

Billie Woods, Director
musicdir@consciousharmony.org
Sue Young

YOUTH EDUCATION SERVICES

Deborah Hale, Children’s Director
childmin@consciousharmony.org
Jacque Botto, Asst to the Children’s Director
Don Hale, Youth Director
youthdir@consciousharmony.org
David Jenkins, Asst to the Youth Director

OFFICE

Mon-Fri 8:30 am-4:00 pm
Donald Genung, Business Mgr
bizmgr@consciousharmony.org
Lisa Genung, Office Mgr
officemgr@consciousharmony.org

BOOKSTORE

Virginia Maxwell, Manager
bookmgr@consciousharmony.org

NEWSLETTER

Sandra Ely, Editor
garzaely@swbell.net
Carol Hagar, Design
lifeisart@austin.rr.com

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

LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE


Work Idea: External considering is the primary way the Work applies the concept of humility into life practice. When humility is put into practice it is usually a manifestation of external considering of someone else, or at least a diminishment of one's own preferences for the sake of another, or for the sake of a larger purpose beyond your own personality's whims, interests, perceptions or desires.

Work Source: "In this Work external considering must be done and internal considering stopped. To externally consider another person it is first necessary to put yourself in the other person's position. To do this you must think of yourself as being this other person, having to do the same things, having the same difficulties, the same handicaps, the same life. Now if you will begin to think of this preliminary step, you can hardly say that external considering has anything to do with being indifferent. To put yourself

in another person's situation calls upon your whole understanding. It requires directed effort of the mind and feelings and not merely once but time and again. And you will certainly be quite incapable of doing this if you are always pre-occupied with your own personal problems and woes and with the way you are being treated – that is, if you are always taking your life from the standpoint of internal considering." Maurice Nicoll, *Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky*, Vol. 1, p. 265.

Practical Application: This month, work at discovering more about what triggers your unwillingness to externally consider someone you regularly interact with. Is there something they do that triggers you? Is there something they say? Notice where your edge of consideration is. Notice where you begin to justify that you're not considering them. Notice the thought and emotions

that conspire to let yourself off the hook from externally considering. The primary aim of the exercise is self-discovery of our triggers. Secondly, the aim is to work at extending our capacity to externally consider, and therefore, extend the time or intensity it takes for us to get triggered. For example, perhaps someone's loud music triggers you. Expand your capacity for patience and toleration of their music. Instead of getting triggered after just one minute of loud music. Perhaps make effort to expand to five minutes before the nervous system gets triggered. One caveat: external considering **never** means condoning, tolerating or accepting physical or verbal abuse.

Supplemental Resources: The gold-standard on external and internal considering can be found in fifty extraordinary pages in Maurice Nicoll's *Commentaries*, Vol. 1, pp. 253-302. Also, the gold-standard scripture passage on humility can be found in Philippians 2:1-18. 

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.

GUIDELINE 8

Grace is the presence and action of Christ
at every moment of our lives.

The sacraments are ritual actions
in which Christ is present in a special manner,
confirming and sustaining the major commitments
of our Christian life.

UPCOMING CENTERING PRAYER RETREATS

MULTI-DAY AT CEDARBRAKE RETREAT AND RENEWAL CENTER

Sep 14-19 6-day Welcoming Prayer \$545*

Nov 30-Dec 6 7-day Advent \$675*

*Double room prices. Single rooms, if available, are an additional
\$10/night on a first-to-register basis.

HALF- AND ONE-DAY AT THE CHURCH OF CONSCIOUS HARMONY

Sept 22 8:30 am-4:30 pm \$15

Oct 20 8:30 am-4:30 pm \$15

Nov 10 12:30 pm-5:00 pm \$10

Dec 15 8:30 am-12:30 pm \$10

Cost is a suggested love offering. Scholarships are available as needed.

Contact the church office to register or register online at
www.consciousharmony.org/calendar

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Visit consciousharmony.org
for a complete listing of events.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Simple Explanation of Work Ideas

Thursdays 7:30 pm-9:00 pm

Sep 6-Oct 11 Pre-register with the office.

Required class for church membership.

Six-Day Centering Prayer Retreat

Sep 14-Sep 19

Contact the office for information.

One-Day Centering Prayer

Sep 22 8:30 am-4:30 pm

Cost \$15 Bring a potluck dish to share.

Pre-register online or with the church office.

MONTHLY

1st Sundays

Bring non-perishables for Caritas

WEEKLY

Sundays

Lectio Divina 8:00-9:00 am

Prayer Circle 9:15-9:45 am

Worship Service 10:00-11:30 am

Youth Program 10:00-11:30 am

Fellowship 11:30 am

Wednesdays

Contemplative Lunch noon-1:00 pm

Contemplative Communion Service 6:00-7:00 pm

Thursdays 7:30-9:00 pm

Work of Inner Christianity Class

Fridays 7:30-8:45 pm

Devotional Service

Saturdays

Scriptorium noon-12:50 pm

DAILY

Sunday-Saturday 7:00-7:35 am

Centering Prayer Service in Theosis Chapel

Recordings of services are available
through the Bookstore and online at
www.consciousharmony.org



THE CHURCH *of* CONSCIOUS HARMONY
A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
7406 NEWHALL LANE AUSTIN TX 78746

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTIN TX
PERMIT # 3386

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*You yourself, a sword will pierce
so that the thoughts of many hearts
may be revealed.*

Luke 2:35

OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Mary's intimate relationship with Christ, her disposition of self-surrender, her alert receptivity, and her promptness in responding to the wishes of the Spirit are the great contemplative virtues. Mary is the paradigm of those who are manifesting Christ in their individual lives. Her compassion was rooted in the kind of love that God has for us – a love that is tender, firm and completely self-giving. In the Ascension Jesus enters with His humanity into the heart of all creation where He dwells everywhere and in everything, visible only to the x-ray eyes of faith that penetrate through every disguise including the greatest of sorrows.

God is reigning despite all appearances to the contrary.

The risen Christ is ever-present.

This is the faith that Mary had when she looked on what was left of her Son and yet saw Him reigning from the cross – the triumph of God hidden in the greatest suffering.

This makes her our companion and support in every conceivable trial.

Thomas Keating, *Awakenings*

