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THE MARK

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RECEIVING

BY PETER HAAS

You may be surprised to learn that I loved playing football as a kid. In fourth through seventh grades, I played tag football with my classmates at recess (whenever the field wasn't covered with ice or snow). Then, in high school, I joined the Brookfield Central Junior Varsity team as a freshman. The coaches took one look at me and said, "Haas ... Receiver."

For me, the most exhilarating moment of playing wide receiver was that moment when a burst of speed broke me clear from a defender. Then, if I turned at just the right moment, a pass from the quarterback might land in my half-outstretched arms. I loved those moments, especially those few catches caught in or near the end zone!

Though inevitably what came next was payment: getting hit; sometimes quite hard, as if the defender was trying to split my body in two. Occasionally, all the joy of running fast and all the glory of a finessed catch came to nothing as a big hit launched the ball out of my hands; then, that dread feeling of knowing I just fumbled the ball.

Playing football taught me a lot about life and friendship, and

even some about the spiritual journey. For example, I learned that the second most important part of playing a game is all the practice prior to it. Practice. Practice. Practice. That's what makes great teams. So too on the spiritual journey, a spiritual community grows strong, joyous, focused, connected, and effective the more we practice alone and together. The quiet joy of spiritual community is practicing in person and together – on Centering Prayer retreats, during worship services, during Lectio Divina, during Seva, through Journey Groups and so on. As the saying goes, *we keep our practice, and our practice keeps us*. And from Psalms 133, *how blessed it is when brothers dwell together in unity*.

If practice is the second most important aspect of playing a game, perhaps the first most important part of playing a game is enjoying it. Working with delight – transforming our Work of Inner Christianity into play, concentration without effort! I can hear Tim Cook, the Church's founding minister, still saying boldly about Nicoll's *Commentaries*: Remember page 10! Remembering

that the *joy of the Lord is our strength* (Nehemiah 8:10). If we are not identified with all the unloading and the downloading, it is much easier to just laugh and enjoy the process. It's really not about us. It's all about God's love calling us and God's light liberating us from our self.

Another truth I learned playing wide receiver was the importance of listening for the quarterback's voice. Every team needs a leader. Good leaders don't seek to control the team, rather, they guide and encourage the team. In high school, we trusted that the quarterback wasn't just listening to his own voice, but was also listening for the coach's voice and guidance. The Latin root of the word hear is "to obey." There is a certain sense of giving our attention to the voice of Spirit, to the Wisdom from above. To receive, to listen is to be under the authority of a voice other than one's own – a higher influence other than the manufactured influences of power, wealth or entertainment.

This too reminds me of the role spiritual leaders play in a spiritual community. The Church of Conscious Harmony is comprised of many leaders, yet one Center:

Christ. As minister, I play a kind of quarterback role. But it is my aim to always remain a receiver: open, listening to Spirit for guidance, insight, correction, encouragement, and counsel. We have a tradition in our community of talking about certain people “holding center” as a way of describing leading a class, retreat or “sitting in the chair.” I would like to add and invite you to do so as well, let’s live its corollary together: *Hold Center as Center holds you.*

Catching and Passing

It is useful to also see how the idea of receiving connects with the Work idea of inner states. Have you ever noticed how easy a mood, an idea or an emotion gets passed on from one person to another, especially in family systems, groups and nations? Some things are taught. But many things are just caught, like a virus or a catchy tune, and once they are caught, they can be passed on. We can pass fear just as easily as we can pass peace. We can gossip just as easily as we can praise. Negative and positive emotional states and expressions are caught and taught equally. For instance, try smiling as

you talk with someone and notice how quite quickly they begin to smile too.

One of the most important Work tools and ideas that helps one to cease passing on negative emotions or thoughts is in learning how to respond to various external influences more consciously. The Work idea goes something like this: external events or influences are not the same as internal states. External events range in intensity, attraction or aversion, concern or appeal. Some events are small, like a flat tire. Other events are large, like a death of a beloved.

Maurice Nicoll has wisely given us guidance on the importance of distinguishing between the external event and our inner state. Such a distinction is both empowering and freeing. Reclaiming our freedom to respond to an external event more consciously, from a higher inner state, doesn’t diminish or deny the reality or impact of any external event. It simply introduces the opportunity to change our relationship and response to it.

Nicoll writes, “So this Work begins with self-observation and noticing wrong states in oneself and working against them. In

this way, the inner life becomes purified and since our inner life attracts our outer life, by changing our inner states, starving some and nourishing others, we also alter not only our relation to events coming from outside but even the nature of the events that comes to us day by day. Only in this way can we change the nature of events that happen to us. We cannot change them directly, but only through changing *states* – that is, through beginning to put this disorderly house we live in into some order.” (*Commentaries*, p. 18)

As we slow down and give ourselves the gift of stillness and silence, we can begin to see the shape and contours of influences such as external events and their interaction with our internal states and responses and reactions.

We are all receivers.


We are also senders.

We catch and we cast.

We receive and we transmit.

We have been given a great gift.

How will we use it?

Enjoy playing your part in the extraordinary stadium games of life that are being transformed into temples of God devotion. 



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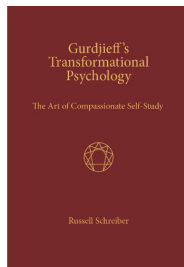
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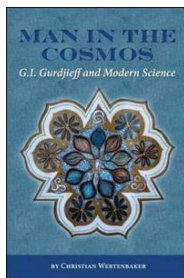
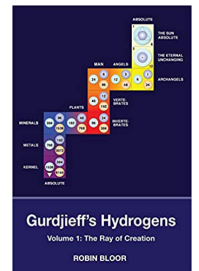
NEW INFLUENCES

We live in a time in need of resources to help make sense of our situation on this planet and our relationship to ourselves and the larger cosmos. In recent years, new Work resources have emerged from first- and second-generation students of G.I. Gurdjieff, P.D. Ouspensky, Maurice Nicoll and J.G. Bennett. Here are three exceptional resources for your continued study and application of the Work ideas – both psychological and cosmological.



*Gurdjieff's Transformational Psychology:
The Art of Compassionate Self-Study*
by Russell Schreiber

*Gurdjieff's Hydrogens Volume 1:
The Ray of Creation*
by Robin Bloor



*Man in the Cosmos:
G.I. Gurdjieff and Modern Science*
by Christian Wertenbaker

SUNDAY SERMON THEMES

August 1	John 6:24-35	C Influences: Presence
August 8	1 Kings 19:4-8	B Influences
August 15	Matthew 11:28-30	Journey into the Unknown
August 22	John 6:60-69	Receiving Words of Life
August 29	James 1:17-27	Gifts from Above



Consecrate us in the Truth. Your word is Truth. John 17:17

ANNUAL AIM: TRUTH OPENS THE EYES OF OUR HEARTS

RECEIVING BY CYNTHIA HARP

Our real life
is this world of impressions
and how we receive them ...
and it is in this world of
impressions that we have to learn
to live in the right way,
this very delicate world that we
are continually concerned with.
... When impressions begin
to fall on us to a deeper level,
we begin to live
in an entirely new world.

If you want to live in a new world
you must go deeper –
you must get away from the
surface world of yourself. ...
If you can do this,
you will notice that you feel
quite different, as if
you had turned on the light.

Maurice Nicoll, *Commentaries*,
“Commentary on the Food of Impressions,”
March 23, 1945

Fire is my child, but I must be
consumed and become fire.

Rumi, *The Center of the Fire*

*Therefore, let us be grateful
for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,
and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship,
with reverence and awe,
for our God is a consuming fire.*

Hebrews 12:28-29

When pondering the topic of receiving, I am perplexed. I feel like the proverbial fish who doubts the existence of water, the very medium in which it lives, breathes, and has its very being. I haven't previously framed my relationship to the Divine as receiving, but isn't this what all of my spiritual practices are for?

Initially, I was thinking receiving is an elusive state. A gift I may be given after more years of spiritual practices. Slowly, Truth began to open the eyes of my heart by moving

from my head down into my heart to perceive. Receiving I saw isn't a sometimes or maybe thing, but an always ever-present potential for it is pervasive, alive, a constant movement toward. It is a state I am enveloped in. It is like a majestic hand reaching out to me, and I can reach up to it always, in any moment. My part is opening and hollowing my heart to make room for its inflow.

We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19

I marvel at the gift that brought me to this community with its rich and transformative teachings and practices. God was filling me and calling me to seek slowly, gently, lovingly. I had been receiving all along, through years of Catholic schools, and then through Eastern spiritual practices.

Much of my seeking has been like a game of hunting treasure, but mostly hide-and-seek. However, there have been moments of receiving that seem like pure gift, like Divine Love is calling me, dazzling me, revealing Its presence and offering gifts of intense beauty, light and infusions of overwhelming love – an obvious Presence sufficient to build faith and trust to encourage my seeking. Some of us have had these experiences that are impossible to be forgotten and perplexingly others have not. It's a Divine mystery all perfect in its own right.

Around the age of eight, I had an unforgettable experience where I received a sense of the Oneness of all creation. Playing alone outside in the cold with a tall pile of bricks, making houses and tunnels with people in them, simply lost in imagination, when suddenly ... I received an experience of interconnectedness, of all things in my yard, and all around, up to the sky. I was enveloped in a feeling of profound peace, oneness and love existing together in all things. I don't have the exact words to describe this, but it felt like a

mother's most loving embrace. Mostly I knew this was how things really were. I had done nothing to receive this. It was purely given, an unmerited grace and I can't know why.

Nature has also been a portal for the outpouring of special graces. Thomas Aquinas said, "Revelation comes in two volumes: nature and the bible." I know we all receive in our personal way great beauty through nature, music, art, and poetry – impressions which touch the Divine and reveal Truth without words. Because I paint realism in watercolor of things from nature, I spend hours contemplating the colors and light. This practice is a gift that has given me new vision to see the magnificence and power of the Creator when I am in nature.

The gifts I have received have served as stakes, which keep me grounded as I travel down this path, standing in the storms and the fires, instead of fleeing to one of my personality's theme songs, "I'll fly away." At times, I have wanted to get off this journey, but I cannot turn back, I find there is no negotiating with God.

Another example of receiving put me directly on this spiritual path 17 years ago during a particularly difficult event that was dismantling my life program for happiness around affection and self-esteem. I wasn't conscious of what was going on outside of the frustrating

programs. I just walked forward with a broken heart. By God's grace, a silence fell over my mouth. Not my heart, it was still in turmoil. Then one day, I found myself sleeping in a small room in a convent. Somehow, I had walked into a room where a monk was giving a talk on Christian meditation. I prayed in my room, holding and accepting what was happening to me. I returned home to Austin and found my way to this community. I learned the twice daily Centering Prayer practice and began a new path towards living in that Divine Love. I felt I was home. I had freely received.

Yearning for this increase of love and peace keeps me on this spiritual journey during the trials. An attraction was created before the times where the dismantling edged in with a vengeance and where all seemed lost and dark. The trials have taken me apart and pushed me to the end of myself, creating deep wounds. Again and again, when I think the trials may subside, a new one seems to await me. Grace is such a mystery. It appears when I don't seek it, but when I most need it, it seems absent. The paradox is that in the felt absence, the great receiving is going on. It is in falling that I received. And not only was there the grace to get up, but there was grace upon grace creating something new in me, or something old being diminished. My being was changing. When my heart is filled with my illusory

programs for happiness, well, the cup is filled. Nothing can enter. The trials are necessary, all of them. As Rumi says, “Fire is my child, and I must be consumed and become the fire.”

In the midst of one of these transformative trials, a very simple teaching I had often heard, came up to meet me in a revelatory way, “When I am negative, nothing higher can enter.” For an extended time, years, I was in the most difficult of trials. In a moment, this aphorism popped up and I had a grand silencing shock that illuminated the futility of my useless suffering, aching, and complaining against God. Which I was doing on the sidelines while I aimed to be centered. I heard I could choose to receive something higher. And I definitely wanted that because absolutely nothing good was coming from the negativity I was feeling. For an instant, I saw that if I could see ‘beyond the veil,’ then I would understand the perfection of all things. A very beautiful gift to remember. Knowing this helped me to reframe my impressions. The trials did not change the circumstance, but they have changed me. I have been able to live with my wounds and keep them close to me, to hold what was handed to me. As scripture says, in my weakness, I become strong.

He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:30

Fr. Thomas Keating says that practices are aimed at self-surrender until all within us desires to greater love, which is the most he says we can do to make room. Knowingly, I am preparing myself for God to transform me slowly into the divine way of being human. I seek for more nothingness. The practices we engage in at The Church of Conscious Harmony like Lectio Divina, Work Partners, Classes, Eucharist, Teachings, and Seva are all practices I love and from which I receive and learn self-surrender. However, nothing has nourished and filled me more than practicing Centering Prayer. Some of the most beautiful everyday ordinary ways of receiving for me are in the daily sitting in the silence. Such a gift that every day I can stop a busy life and take hold of that majestic ever-present light reaching out to me so that my whole being can rest with no words, just being with the Beloved.

“Remaining still inwardly is perfect effort.” Ramana Maharshi

During my 17 years of daily contemplative prayer, I know my heart has been expanded to live with greater love and compassion. The gift of silence helps me in difficult situations to accept, to not know, to just be with it all. It provides me with the space to aim and to remember:

Whatever things are true ... noble,

pure, lovely ... whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things ... These things which you have received ... and the peace of God will be with you. Phil 4:8-9

As I arrive at the end of this study on Receiving, it’s clear that my heart must continue to open to receive and become what I am. Fr. Keating reminds us, “Divine love never stops coming but waits for us to shed the obstacles in us to awaken fully to the Divine Presence within us.” I can see that everything is an offering from the Divine: this trial, that blessing, that heartache, this person, this failure, and that gain. All of it. Everything. My life in the past, my life in the now and my life in the future – all gift – all receiving. I am receiving from trees, rainstorms, birds, friends, strangers, beloveds, higher realms, from God. Each breath I take is a gift. You looking at me – me looking at you – is a gift. It is a humbling vision. I hope that what I receive can be used in my ordinary life to live with greater love, to awaken fully to the Divine Presence. This definitely is lifelong work. I pray that as God is being revealed in me, over and over, now and into the future, so you too receive, and the greater cosmos receives, and Love evolves. ☉

LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE

INFLUENCES BY NATHAN JONES


Work Idea: The Work speaks of two types of influences that act on people: A and B influences. A influences are created by life and are what most people likely refer to *as* life. Among other things, A influences are wars and entertainment, politics and policy, news and sports. They are manifested by humans living with and around other humans. They are fickle and change with time. We know that the definition of beautiful and attractive that one holds is largely based on the time and place in which we were raised. Just as the sport we cheer for is largely based on the country where we grew up. Both of these transient, yet seemingly strong and unchangeable feelings, are examples of A influences. B influences are sewn into life from higher sources (the Conscious Circle of Humanity) and are not *of* this world. They originate as C influences yet are turned into B influences by sensual and formatory thinking. Examples of B influences include the teachings of Jesus, the Koran, the Bhagavad

Gita, and the Work. They speak a universal language that is beyond time and space. It is said that they have always been here and will always be. They are called different names in different times. They are the teachings that can pierce, touch and light fire to all of us.

Work Source: “When a person feels the existence of A and B influences and realizes that C influences must exist outside life, to account for the presence of B influences within life, they begin to feel the presence of something higher than themselves. This begins to awaken the emotional center and to make conscious effort possible. Otherwise, the person will only feel self-emotions and remain in the narrow sphere of themselves.” Maurice Nicoll, *Commentaries*, p. 92.

Application: How apropos the origins of the word *influence* was an astrological term from the late 14th century meaning, “streaming ethereal power from the stars when in certain positions, acting upon character or destiny of men,” and “emanation from the stars that acts

upon one’s character and destiny.” Influence derives from the Latin term “in-fluere,” to flow inside of something. Consider, this day, which influences you would put yourself under. Will you get swept up in the local or international news, maybe a competitive sports match, or hosting something of dire importance; will you speak strongly and forcefully of politics and policy, trade and economics? Will you be swayed by must-see movies, a fanciful new streaming event, something outside, inside, around water or in the cool air conditioning? Perhaps you think you just need a smattering of the good stuff, say once a week on Sunday. More likely, we could all use a shower to wash off this culture and bathe ourselves in these Work teachings whose existence mirror more closely the stars and not us mortals. More likely, we need something that looks and feels like a daily practice. That when kept, will keep you.

Further Resource: Watch the 1979 Gurdjieff-based movie *Meetings with Remarkable Men*. 

ELDER WISDOM: HONORING OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

THE BEAUTY OF LIFE

BY JEANETTE NORRIS

The poet Mary Oliver writes, “It is possible, I suppose, that sometime we will learn everything there is to learn: what the world is, for example, and what it means ... it is heaven itself to take what is given, to see what is plain; what the sun lights up willingly.”

Beauty has always figured prominently in my life, though I have not always recognized it. Events may seem ugly beyond description until seen from a distance. On the other side and looking back, the gift appears – shining bright, surprising in its beauty – a jewel to be treasured. Other events, I knew from the beginning that the gift was at the center, its beauty waiting to be received. I came to understand, there is always a gift and beauty is always in the gift.

J. Ruth Gendler calls beauty an essential quality that stops us in our tracks, takes us outside of ourselves, and at the same time it brings us into ourselves. Beauty invites us to build bridges and make connections between the senses and the soul, between contemplation and expression, between ourselves

and the world. Beauty is in the opposites, and in the reconciling force. Native cultures speak of the Beauty Road, which tells of their respect for balance between night and day, earth and sky, masculine and feminine, life and death. The Navajo call beauty *hozho*, which means harmony, wholeness and goodness.

One morning, when I lived in San Miguel de Allende in Mexico, I joined my Tai Chi class on the rooftop of an old building on the mountain side in Juarez Park. There were about 15 of us. Midway into our practice, we turned to Sweep the Lotus and in unison, gasped, struck still by beauty. A lone white egret perched easily on the branch of a jacaranda tree, its branches heavy with an abundance of purple blossoms. The egret regarded us calmly with dignity, then lifting its wings, shimmering in the light, rose gracefully and flew away. It was a shared moment of beauty, the impression penetrating time, becoming timeless, ever alive in memory. It was a gift. The class resumed as a different class. In

unison, the movements now flowed softer and more supple, having been touched by the Grace of Beauty. The Beauty Road.

I have been a seeker all my life, looking here and there for answers to the Great Mystery. Not long after receiving the gift from the egret, another gift came. On a trip back to the States, I heard that Tim and Barbara Cook had started a new church. I went. I listened. My heart sang. I bought books by Thomas Keating on Centering Prayer and Maurice Nicoll on Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. I read that Gurdjieff said, “Without a group, nothing is possible.” I wanted a group, I wished for a School. After persistence on my part, Tim allowed me to become a corresponding student of the Tenth Man School. 30 years later, I have not looked back.

Centering Prayer and the Work of Inner Christianity provide answers, freely given, but not easy to receive and apply. Fortunately, my Wish and my chair help me receive. How beautiful to sink into down feather cushions, threadbare now from so much use, and begin

my morning practice of Centering Prayer, opening to the presence and action of God. The chair has seen years of yielding to the sometimes gentle, sometimes painful work of the Divine Therapist as I struggle to let go of the Programs for Happiness so deeply ingrained. There is still work to do, more letting go, more reading, taking in the food of impressions. Sometimes I think I should get a new chair, a bit firmer perhaps. And then, I look at the chair and I see the Beauty of the Practice, and I know; the chair will stay.

Another gift appeared during my journey. I was asked to serve on Centering Prayer retreats. I said “Yes” and an adventure began into beauty of a different form, the Beauty of Serving. And, what a gift that was ... and is! If ever I were asked to give advice, I would say, “Do it! Jump in! Give and give some more. Get in line to serve. Learn to Dance with the Holy Spirit! When serving on retreats, opportunities abound for you to work against False Personality, to come under authority, to gently love your brothers and sisters and to be a vessel of the Beauty of Service. It is being awake to the present moment and the presence of God.” You will understand what Fr. Keating meant when he said he was just a little pencil and the Spirit moved the pencil. I received so much more than I gave. God is not stingy

with His Blessings and His Grace. One has only to ask for help and it is freely given. I count the Beauty of Serving as an essential quality on my path toward transformation. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

To describe the importance and the Beauty of the Work, Nicoll writes, “Unless you see the beauty of the Work, unless you desire it as something lovely, it cannot make right contact with you ... Now seeing beauty in something is to love it ...” He goes on to say that we have a right not to be negative. For when we are negative, we are identified. He continues, “There is great beauty in realizing that it is unnecessary to be identified and you have the sanction of the Work not to identify. Here lies great beauty and it has something to do with connecting with Higher Centers eventually.”

Practicing with intrigue, the basic tools accompanied me – Self-Observation, Non-Identification, and Self-Remembering. Plus, separation of ‘T’s, the *Commentaries*, Work class, Second Line groups, Work ideas, the Movements, and a community of students. I set my Aim and my intention. I actively engaged the Work, remembering Gurdjieff’s aphorism, “Roasted pigeon doesn’t fly into your mouth.” The Work requires effort. I Worked.

Eventually, I became aware of a different feeling. When I looked at

my fellow students, a smile would come, and then I could feel a light in my eyes, a warmth in my heart. The feeling was genuine. I loved my brothers and sisters. And then, over time, something even stranger happened. I began to feel loved. That was novel to this personality type that feels so broken and unlovable. I came to understand that when Fr. Keating spoke about our basic core of goodness, he also meant me. I am good, as are you. I am loved, as are you. Maybe understanding this is part of the purification of the emotional center. We are loved, grounded in God. Could another definition of Beauty be Love? I don’t know, but there is Beauty in the Work and in Life.

There is one more I’d like to share: The Beauty in Nature. As a child growing up on a farm on the plains of Kansas, curiosity and the need to explore the outdoors were my constant companions. I was particularly curious about the wonderful rocks I found, making up stories about where they had been and their great adventures. The exploration of the origins, beauty and mystery of minerals, rocks, the earth and cosmos has continued throughout my life.

I went on a trip to Alaska in June with some friends. My geologist heart, eager to glimpse “The Last

continued on page 11

OUR MONTHLY PRACTICE: WATCHING THE LIGHT

One of the most important preparatory practices for worship, meditative prayer or *lectio divina*, is the practice of taking time to be silent and still while watching the light fade up at dawn into day, and/or fade out at dusk into dark. This month, try to wake up early, while it is still dark and sit still and watch the light fade in from dark. Try the same practice at night, beginning with sunset, remaining still and watching the light till the sky is dark and the stars are out. Notice how long the process takes. Notice any resistance to the exercise. Notice how easy the mind wanders. Simply return ever so gently to the *Visio Divina* of simply being with the light on its journey. What does the light reveal in you? What feelings arise? What sensations occur? What thoughts and emotions are you aware of? ☸

Great Wild” looked forward to our journey into Denali. We knew that we might not be able to view the great mountain, which the Athabascans called Denali “The High One.” We were told the mountain hides behind clouds; but when we arrived, the mountain was standing tall and majestic, gleaming white, the highest point in North America. Its geologic history is unusual in that it formed from below. It sits at the bend of an intersection between two tectonic plates, which results in force being exerted upon it from different directions. It has nowhere to go and grows straight up! As I gazed upon this marvel, the Work came to me. The Viewer became the Viewed, and the Viewed became the Viewer. I remembered Gurdjieff’s saying, “A

man must hold on to the rope. The winds may come, he may be turned and twisted, but he always holds on to the rope.” The High One said, “Go Vertical! Hold on to the rope!” Yes! Thank you.

May I always go vertical, holding on to the rope of the Work.

May Beauty abound.

May it be so. ☸

2021 ANNUAL AIM READING

EYE OF THE HEART
BY CYNTHIA BOURGEAULT

AUGUST CALENDAR

For more details, visit
consciousharmony.org or call 512-347-9673

SPECIAL EVENTS

1-Day Online Retreat w/ Jim Reale
Aug 7 9am-3pm \$25 Register online

Song & Silence
Aug 21 9am-3pm \$15 Register online

5-Day Centering Prayer Retreat w/ Jim Reale
Sept 10-14 at Cedarbrake in Belton TX
\$590 single room Register online

MONTHLY

Caritas Donations
1st Sundays
Bring non-perishables for Caritas
or please consider making a donation of food
or money directly to caritasofaustin.org

WEEKLY

Sundays
*Centering Prayer & Lectio Divina 8-9am
*Intercessory Prayer 9am
†Worship Service 10-11:30am
†Youth Program (pre-K-12) 10-11:30am
†Fellowship 11:30am

Wednesdays
†Contemplative Worship Service 6:30-7:15pm

Thursdays
*The Journey School Class 7-8:30pm

Saturdays
*Scriptorium 11am
*Compline 9-9:15pm

DAILY

*Centering Prayer Service 7-7:35am

*Please join these services, groups, and classes via
online video conferencing. Contact the website for
accessible links and more information.
†Open for in-person at CCH



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*And when the disciples raised their eyes,
they saw no one else but Jesus alone.*

MATTHEW 17:8

THE GRACE OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

Notice that the disciples, after He touched them,
“saw no one but Jesus.” This observation
describes the fruit of the interior touch of the Spirit
... which leads and moves us ...

to see Him in everything that happens.

Thus, as the disciples return to the plain,
they take with them, not the experience of Jesus’ glory,
which was so consoling, but something even more valuable:
the transformation of consciousness that is the result
of their experience on the mountain.

... They moved beyond fear and the domination
of any emotion and are now able to live life
on the plain in union with God.

They can live in the marketplace from their inmost center,
their True Self.

The grace of the Transfiguration is not just a vision of glory,
an isolated experience of divine consolation, however exalted.

... Its primary purpose is something greater:
to empower us to live in the presence of God
and to see the radiance of that presence in all events,
people, the cosmos, and in the universe.

Thomas Keating, *Rearwakenings*

Such grace is a gift of Centering Prayer.

