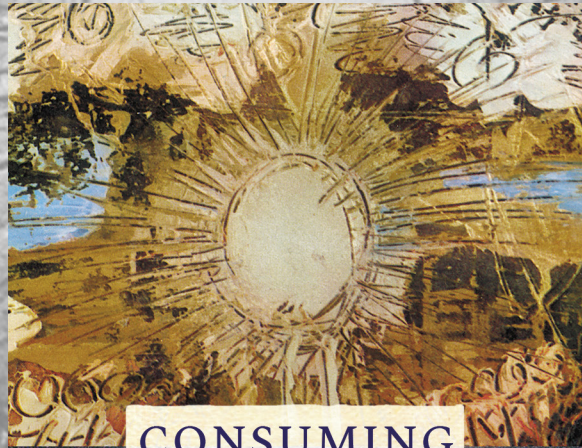


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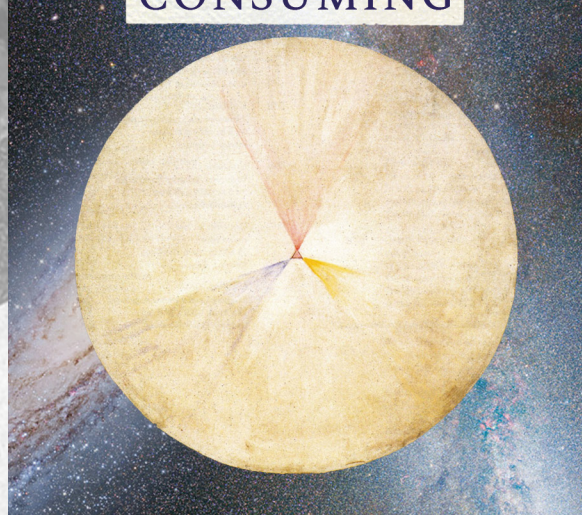


# THE MARK

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



CONSUMING



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# BON APPETITE

BY PETER HAAS

One of the most memorable aphorisms (or wisdom sayings) conveyed by the Work lineage is this:

## **Everything is eating something**

This insight, banal at first reading, is perhaps, upon sustained reflection, quite profound, even revelatory. The source of this insight comes from Mr. Gurdjieff's teaching related to the Ray of Creation and Table of Hydrogens, which suggests that at the physical level of the universe, energy is being consumed, transformed, and transferred by way of a kind of "eating" process.

On a psycho-spiritual level of our day to day lived experience, the idea that everything is eating something is a useful Koan for self-observation: What is eating me? What emotion, thought, sensation, appetite, mood, disposition, is consuming my attention, my energy, my life-force?

Mr. Nicoll is warmly remembered by his students for his congenial, yet deeply insightful teaching and one-on-one conversations at English pubs over pints of beer, and what Nicoll referred to as beefsteaks. On

many occasions, Nicoll would point to the beefsteak to make the point that in this state – beef on a plate – the energy of the beefsteak was limited. But if one were to eat the steak, and properly digest the steak, the beef would be transformed into living energy and nutrients for the maintenance and functioning of your body.

It's also helpful to remember that the beefsteak had already been in a process of transformation prior to arriving on your plate. For instance, to make the point, you can't eat a whole, living cow. But after the proper care and process, one can eat part of a cow – the beefsteak – right off your dinner plate. Feel free to change the illustration to a turkey breast or a tofu burger; the principles of transformation by way of eating remain true.

If that makes perfect sense on the physical, literal level, how much more so on the psycho-spiritual level. For instance, if you let your set of Commentaries sit, as it were, on your plate. Prized nicely on the shelf for the viewing, but if you never open the books and actually read and digest the teaching, insights and wisdom that the books contain,

then their potential to transform and feed you is significantly limited. Meanwhile, you're missing out on the possibility of consuming such wisdom and ideas that can lead to a transforming of your being – a real feeding of your being, your knowledge and thus contribute to your understanding.

This takes us to the next point regarding the importance of connecting the idea of consuming with our spiritual journey. And that is this:

## **We need help digesting what we eat**

Consuming transformational ideas can cause indigestion. So there often comes a point in our lifetime when we realize that we need help digesting certain ideas, events or experiences. We discover that we need wisdom beyond our own limited understanding. That we need others to help us grow in love, wisdom, presence and understanding. The extraordinary book *Meditations on The Tarot: A Christian Journey into Hermeticism* refers to these digestive aids as ideas, literally Arcanum: spiritual and psychological enzymes that help us

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“digest” and transform one idea or experience into a spiritual food. This can also be referred to as spiritual alchemy, transforming the lead of life into the gold of spiritual wisdom. What are your enzymes? What principles do you use to “consume” and “digest” the events of life?

Consuming ideas is also more meaningful when done in community. Let’s extend the analogy.

### **Eating together**

The family dinner table or dinner out at a restaurant with friends is so enjoyable because the nature of dinner fellowship: eating alone is survival. Eating together is community.

Extending the analogy even deeper, we can see that when it comes to eating together in community, there is nothing quite as important as having a teacher and a school to help us on your spiritual journey. No teacher, lineage or school is perfect. That’s not the point. The point is partnership not perfection. The point is togetherness not blissfulness. Most of us discover early on that we need wise, grounded, experienced teaching partners on our journeys. Teachers come in all sorts of guises,


but the best teachers are true to something higher than themselves. They also freely acknowledge what they do know and more importantly what they don’t know. Teachers are still eating wisdom for their own development.

Perhaps the most important digestive aid we can partake in during this era of vast oversupply of ideas and teachers and teachings is a school. To continue the analogy, a school is like combing the kitchen and family dining room. Even more accurate, a school is like a restaurant: there are chefs; there are servers; there are those who take care of making everything function smoothly behind the scenes; there is a host, and of course there are the many guests and participants who eat together and share the experience, sometimes weekly.

As we near the end of the year 2021, focusing on the theme of “Truth Opens The Eyes of Our Hearts,” I encourage you to ponder your ongoing openness and willingness to partake in all or some of the aspects of The Journey School for 2022. Each week, the chefs prepare a banquet for our joy and well-being. Different presenters, like kind-hearted waiters, serve up a lesson. Each week, ideas are served

and discussed around small tables we call Journey Groups. And many of us have daily snack conversations with our Work Partners, reflecting on a morsel of wisdom or a particular Work idea or Aim.

If you are hungry for wisdom and understanding, seeking Truth for your life, having troubles “digesting” the ideas of the Work and practices of contemplative Christianity, or open to making a meal and serving it up as a presenter, then I encourage you to again come to the table and be in the family that is The Church of Conscious Harmony.

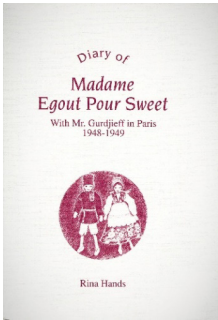
Partake in the full menu that is offered by The Journey School. Journey with us. Don’t just sample. Indulge. Don’t just be a video voyeur, engage. It’s hard enough to be on the spiritual journey, not to mention being on it alone. Let’s partake in the banquet of wisdom laid out for us by those Cooks whose recipes live on in the community, flavored and enhanced by the living spices lingering among us: Gurdjieff, Nicoll, Keating and Bernadette. Eat. Become. Be the living food for the Work of God among and through us. 

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# BOOK LOOK

## THE MEALS AT GURDJIEFF'S TABLE IN PARIS



Rina Hands was an excellent typist, and she was invited to visit Mr. Gurdjieff in Paris in 1949 to help type the manuscript of *Beelzebub's Tales*. During this visit, Rina kept a diary, later published as the book titled, *Diary of Madame Egout Pour Sweet*.

This book gives a privileged view of the way Gurdjieff taught in his last year. There was a daily reading, usually from *Beelzebub's Tales*, and a supper with “special” toasts to those attending. It was during the last several months of Gurdjieff's life, around Gurdjieff's dinner table, that Rina Hands, a student of P.D. Ouspensky and J.G. Bennett in England, met with Gurdjieff and attended these dinners. In this lovely first-hand account, Rina Hands describes the readings and the meals and her attempts to understand what the meaning of it all was. Though nearing death, Gurdjieff dominates the dinners, passing his food to others at the table and giving unique toasts, keenly expressing what Mr. Gurdjieff saw in the personality and essence of his guests.

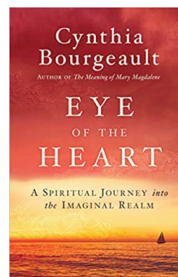
Rina Hands returned to England and in 1951, after Nicoll's death, began teaching The Work. Her groups flourished. In the mid-1980s, our friend Robin Bloor met Rina and joined her group. ☺

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## 2021 ANNUAL COMMUNITY READING

Cynthia Bourgeault's *Eye of the Heart* pairs so well with our 2021 Annual Aim theme, *The Truth Opens The Eyes of Our Hearts*. We're asked to read it slowly, in small portions, so as to guide us in an interior transformation of our centers (emotional, intellectual and physical).

Please join us on November 21<sup>st</sup>, during worship service for our last community discussion about these rich and meaningful ideas. ☺



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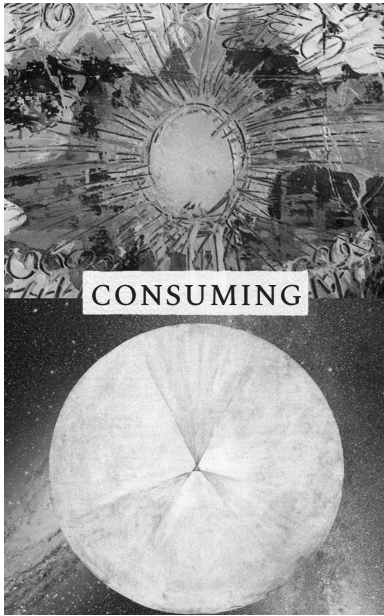
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*Consecrate us in the Truth. Your word is Truth. John 17:17*

## ANNUAL AIM: TRUTH OPENS THE EYES OF OUR HEARTS

ON CONSUMING BY DUBERLY MAZUELOS

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The pouring out of divine love into  
wholly other matter  
is the Christification  
of the universe. ...  
from the least particle of matter to  
the convergent human community.  
As divine love empties itself  
into the other,  
it empowers the other ...  
to flourish. ...  
God is not a superior Being  
who lords it over us;  
rather, God stands “under” us,  
hidden within ordinary reality  
as the “real,” the whole of the whole,  
the depth of love. ... Divine Will  
always will submit itself to gropings,  
to detours, even to revolts  
of human will to bring it  
to a free consent. ...  
The self-emptying of God  
into the other is the fullness  
of God in the other.  
This mystery  
of emptiness and fullness  
undergirds the humility of God.  
Divine power  
is not a force over us  
but the humility of love beneath us,  
the love that makes existence possible.

Ilia Delio,  
*The Unbearable Wholeness of Being, God,  
Evolution, and the Power of Love*

*May you have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones  
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,  
and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,  
so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Ephesians 3:18-19

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My first reaction to contributing to this newsletter was one of delight; but as I pondered this month’s theme, I became reluctant. I can see how for a notable portion of my life, I’ve held a negative attitude towards the idea of consumption. This attitude shows up in certain thoughts, feelings and even bodily sensations. In the language of the Work of Inner Christianity, these parts of myself are referred to as ‘I’s, and they can play a significant role in my daily experiences. Associations around the word “consuming” can conjure up images of plastic water bottles and quickly evoke thoughts

like this: we consume 100 million tons of plastic every year, some 10 percent of this plastic ends up in the oceans, an estimated 300 million plastic bags every year end up in the Atlantic Ocean alone. These thoughts can bring along feelings of resentment, guilt and despair. If I allow them to continue for too long, my stomach begins to feel ill. To make these ‘I’s feel better about the situation, there are other ‘I’s that have been known to bring back recycling in carry-on luggage from international business trips. Talk about being consumed!

The word consumption also has

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associations for other 'T's around certain types of material possessions: houses, automobiles, shoes, etc. In my twenties, I remember sitting at a street corner in Austin counting how many SUVs went by with but a single person in them. You may wonder why I would do such a thing. Well, contempt for the consumption of modern society was the apparent reason; being consumed by vanity and self-righteousness likely played a bigger part. At the time, I lived in a "humble" studio apartment with a bed and one sofa, I drove a Honda Civic and walked barefoot most of the time. I was excellent at judging everyone and everything. I secretly hoped society would consume itself in a big ball of fire just so I could scream, "I told you so!" I can see some of these 'T's to this day.

As I revisit these memories in the light of the Work and teachings from The Church of Conscious Harmony, I can be more open. I ponder the idea that when I am identified (allowing these 'T's to own me/take over) and experiencing negative emotions, I am unable to see the whole picture; I see only half-truths, or truths connected in the wrong order. For example, I could not consider the immense relief that water in a plastic bottle can bring to those who don't have running water, who are consumed by thirst and hunger, perhaps so

much so that it saves their life.

The remedy to the unease of my twenties was to escape the madness of modern society by attempting to live like a monk – a Buddhist monk, mind you. I had wanted to be a priest for most of my childhood, so becoming a monk was not at all farfetched (other than my Catholic mother would have excommunicated me). My friends in elementary school nicknamed me Monja Loca because I went public with my vow to become a priest early on. Then, in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I kissed a girl for the first time; and well, I lived innocently consumed by first love for several years. I remember praying soon after that remarkable kiss and asking God if it would be okay to go back to my priestly vow after this one and only girlfriend. Anyways, in my twenties I dove unabashedly into Eastern teachings and meditation. I took a religion class at the community college and practiced martial arts daily. I wore kung-fu pants most of the time and my long hair was tied in a ponytail like a Samurai. I was "cool" back then and strutted a very rich personality.

The monk thing didn't stick (What fool thinks that a monk can live immersed in this society anyways!) The next way offered to me came through the book *The Tracker* by Tom Brown, which practically leaped off the shelf and into my

hands as I wandered the aisles of a long since forgotten bookstore. The solution was beautifully simple and oh so exciting: I would walk deep into the woods with a knife and the clothes on my back and not look back. I would live in a shelter I built with my own hands. I would bathe in a creek and hunt with a bow. I would make arrows, after asking the plant people for permission to take one of their lives, and forage what the Earth had to offer me that season. I spent much time and effort taking classes and practicing primitive skills. During that period of my life, I was also led to the Red Road, the Spiritual Path practiced by the Native-American people. During my first Inipi Ceremony (Sweat Lodge), I was on the ground completely consumed by the heat. I was so spent I couldn't move and could barely breathe. I was going to die, but at least I was going to do so lying half-naked on the ground and praying. Suddenly the thought of Jesus on the cross came to me, and a glimpse into the overwhelming suffering He endured that day. I wondered how much harder it must have been than my experience in that moment, and I felt very humbled. Then, I also felt the great love He professed for us all, the Love that led Him to that cross. I stayed on the ground and cried for some time. I thank the Grandfathers for the gift they gave

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me that day.

Back then, the only way I could imagine dealing with the state of the world was to separate from it. As a small child, my mom took me to visit her aunt, a cloistered nun living separated from the world. We met in a small room divided by jail-like bars; she sat on the one wooden chair on her side of the bars. I don't remember much of our interaction, but as we were leaving the cloister, I noticed a small window on the wall high above my head, also with bars, that faced the interior of the monastery, and I asked my mom what the nuns did all day. "They pray," she said. "What? All day?" I thought to myself, and I was overcome by a feeling of deep wonder and curiosity. I believe this event was the foundation of magnetic center in me. Not knowing why or how, I knew that's what I wanted to do too. My kindergarten vow to become a priest, my pretending to be a monk, my excitement at the prospect of living purely in nature, these were all attempts to renounce this world so I could devote myself to God. This one wish to be close to God has always been with me, at times all-consuming, and at others at arms-length and to my right.

You can imagine my surprise when I heard of the Fourth Way and read this: "... for people who want to make God devotion the

center of their lives while living in the ordinary world without the aid of monastery walls." Maybe I didn't have to separate from society after all. Plus, I had kissed another girl who became my beloved, and at the time our lives were consumed by a young daughter and a wild toddler boy ... and a business ... a house ... a job. As I wandered the grounds at CCH trying to understand why the quietness was so consuming, I read the name "Don Juan" on a tile on the path to the Theosis Chapel. That was the clincher.

There seems to have been plenty of consuming and being consumed thus far for this one and it all seems to have been lawful. The first Obligolnian striving compels me "to have in our ordinary being-existence everything satisfying and really necessary for our planetary body," which seems to me necessitates consumption. The Work says I must consume three kinds of food (nourishment, air and impressions) or I would not be able to exist on Earth as I am now. The Work also says we are all food for something else.


*Blessed is the Lion whom the man devours, for that lion will become man. But cursed is the man whom the lion devours, for that lion will become man.* Gospel of Thomas

The sun consumes and is consumed as it gives off heat and

light and life – so does a tree, and the four-legged, and the creepy-crawlies. Essence can consume personality. Negative emotions can consume hours of my day. Love is all consuming. It happens inside and out, above and below, at all levels and in all scales. The question for me becomes, "What will I consume, and what will I allow to consume me?"

A few of the things that I enjoy consuming these days are:

7:00 a.m. Centering Prayer. Jellyfish IPAs while talking Work ideas with my "Broders." The sharing from my community during The Journey School class on Thursdays. Dinner with my daughter when she is back from college. The music from the stars on a clear silent night. Reading tiles as I sweep the CCH walkways on Seva Sunday. The eternity I can find looking into the eyes of my wife. The mix of pride and concern I feel when my son shifts into second gear at the bottom of the hill and drops the clutch. The Holy Eucharist.

As I must consume, so must I be consumed; I do so freely and joyfully. I wish and pray that I can do it more consciously today than I did yesterday, and do my part in the Great Exchange, "in order afterwards to be free to lighten as much as possible the Sorrow of our Common Father." And that, perhaps, will be close enough to God for this heart. 

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# ELDER WISDOM: HONORING OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

SIMPLE ACTS BY DEBORAH HALE

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“Whenever our basic sense of peace is disturbed,  
we need to reaffirm our intention  
to be united with God by some simple and appropriate act or acts.”  
Bob Mischke, “Guard of Heart”

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My elder wisdom is about the simple acts that form my practice. In focusing my intention to be one with God, to be an instrument that God can operate through in this world, I’ve been gifted with reaffirming simple acts. Here is a list of the ones that I’ve found most useful and sacred. May these suggestions inspire you to focus on simple acts in your own journey of *Becoming*.

**Make your home holy.** Create a threshold into the Sacred Space of your home. You can offer any space to the Presence of God in any moment. Remembering God initiates the simple act of Sacred Space making. When you return again and again to a consecrated spot, make it more intentionally sacred as you constate the Presence of God. I walk through my home with lit incense singing or stating, “This is holy ground. I’m standing on holy ground.” Noticing the sacred icons on the walls, walking

intentionally through each room, I count the Mary icons or the other feminine faces. I look for the Sacred Hearts.

**Find a few active prayer sentences to accompany you:**

I surrender.  
Thy will be done.  
God is, and all is well.

**Consent to the presence and action of the Divine.** Consent through daily practice of Centering Prayer and then continue throughout the day. Your full consent to the authentic presence and action of God may be activated any time you initiate an action. Through this consent you are asking for divine help. Asking activates the potential energy available from the higher power. Through consent we can pray without ceasing. Praying for help in all big and little things proves essential. Ask for help

before answering an email, or when sitting down face-to-face to address something tricky. Pray for wise and kind words when someone comes to you in crisis, or when you want to request some kind of upgrade from a loved one or co-worker. Ask that you be honest and courageous when someone comes to you to express one of the ways they believe you are missing the mark. Consent to God when you are discouraged. Ask to do no harm. Surrender more fully to God each day. Pray to forgive yourself. Get up again.

**Have prayer partners.** I have a prayer date with Fred and Chris Sams, and my husband Don at 9 p.m. every day of the week. I have set an alarm to call me to stop for a moment at 9:00 and pray with them and for them. Then, I remember anyone else who comes to mind that I have been asked or



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wish to pray for, placing them all in the hands of our Beloved.

**Place yourself under the canopy of the Work of Inner Christianity.** Then, quit taking anything personally.

**Forgive quickly and hold no grievances.**

**Let go.** “Let go of every emotional disturbance as it arises before you start thinking about it.” (from Guard of the Heart)

**Be extraordinarily thankful!** Radical Gratitude is the secret key to neutralizing negative emotions. Never underestimate the amazing power of gratitude. It is a simple act with incalculable magnificence. Keep a gratitude journal. Focus on what you want more of.

**Be Here Now.** Being here now is something that takes a lot of getting used to. Eventually you start dissolving, radically. It can be uncomfortable. Be Here Now is and is not a simple act. Have a simple question that allows you to access guidance in the present moment. Mine is: How can I handle this happily?

**Make some wishes.** Wishes are very important! I think you get more than the three wishes mentioned in fairy tales, but maybe only three wishes at a time.

**Bless your food.** It is a blessing to have food to eat. “And the universe is abundant” is the way we end our dinner blessing. Each time I begin to worry about scarcity or speak about it, I try to cancel/clear the fear and replace with the higher truth, *and the universe is abundant*. Cancel/clear the fear is not just for scarcity concerns. You can cancel/clear any falsities, anything you find yourself saying that you do not absolutely want to be true.

**Co-create.** Access the quantum field and co-create by working within the field. What the field has shown me is that in some moments, when I can more fully incarnate, I’m able to take a dipper and scoop from the field and direct it toward something. I can work in and with the light to direct the light toward where it can be a blessing.

**Establish aims that help you summon your future self.** Communicate with your future self. Send messages from your future self and be ready to receive messages from your **future** future self. I learned from Jean Houston about burying terms, which are messages to be discovered in the future in a specific location by your future self. You could play around with that. That is a kind of Godly Play for grown-ups.

**Pray the Prayer of Jabez.** *Oh Lord,*

*that you would bless me indeed and enlarge my territory; that your hand would be with me and keep me from evil, that I would do no harm. I always thought the Amen was after harm, but it goes on to say, and God granted his requests. 1 Chronicles 4:10*

For other elders, I offer this: the only thing we must not forget is to **Remember God**. Our many memories may become slippery. We can let this happen in a graceful way through surrender to God. This surrender as we age is the third of Thomas Keating’s four consents. We accept the diminution of self. Diminution is the process of becoming less. This diminution thing really happens. If you find you cannot remember details from the beautiful feasts of spiritual wisdom we are offered weekly through services, Journey School course material, *Commentaries* and all the many volumes, simply gather short bite-sized pieces of wisdom and read them often. It is worth repeating this bite-sized gem: *Let go of every emotional disturbance as it arises* (Guard of the Heart). Sounds relatively simple, right? It isn’t for me yet, but I am finding this small reminder to be making some difference. I’m writing it down in my journal, my teacher planner, post-it notes, anyplace I will come across it.

May these simple acts inspire you to identify and document your own simple practices and be inspired to offer more of these movements into your journey toward God. ☉

## LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE

CONSUMING: WE BECOME THAT WHICH WE RECEIVE

BY MARNIE HALUSKA

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**Work Idea:** P.D. Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* records Mr. Gurdjieff's teaching on the nature of the Eucharist, namely that at the Lord's Supper, Jesus offered his literal flesh as food and blood as drink to his disciples, creating an eternal consumed, digested consanguinity between them. The text reports that this macabre spin on the institution of the Lord's Supper landed heavily with many of its hearers, but others welcomed it as insight to the deeper nature of the Eucharist. In the same text, Ouspensky documents Mr. G's teaching that the human organism is sustained through the consumption of three foods - the physical food we eat, the air we breathe and the impressions we receive. Can we synthesize these two teachings on consumption? How can a student of the Work of Inner Christianity extend Mr. G's perspective to a deeper understanding of the true nature of all foods we consume? Is it possible that the Word offers us its True Body in every moment, in all that we take in through our lungs, our minds, our mouths, and our physicality? Is the cosmos the Body of the Word diffused across the heavens, the Divine circumscribed

in matter? Does the Body of the Holy commingle with our own via the ordinary elements that give rise to life? Is a sacramental alchemy at play as our own physical substance fuses with the One in a Eucharistic exchange that alters, transfigures and transforms from within as we digest the Incarnate Word in all that we see, smell, taste, feel and hear around us? Is everything offered us in the created order truly the Body of the Word? The stars above? "This is My Body, broken for you." The voids below? "This is My Body, broken for you." The golden light of the late year that grows shadow-giants on sidewalks out of the tiny bodies of children? "This is My Body, broken for you." The blush of the apple? "This is My Body, ..." The final clan of migrating geese overhead as the earth prepares for her long dormancy? "... broken for you."

**Work Source:** "Christ knew that he must die. It had been decided thus beforehand. He knew it and his disciples knew it. And each one knew what part he had to play. But at the same time they wanted to establish a permanent link with Christ. And for this

purpose he gave them his blood to drink and his flesh to eat. It was not bread and wine at all, but real flesh and real blood. ... The Last Supper was a magical ceremony similar to 'blood-brotherhood' ..." (*In Search of the Miraculous*, p. 98) "All the substances necessary for the maintenance of the life of the organism ... are produced by the organism from the food which enters it from outside. The human organism receives three kinds of food: 1. The ordinary food we eat 2. The air we breathe 3. Our impressions." (ibid, p. 181)

**Application:** In a month marked by the joyful celebration of all that we have received over the course of this passing year, would it be possible for you to offer the gift of your attention to the Eucharistic nature of all you digest in the physical foods you consume, the air you breathe, the impressions that land within you?

**Further Resource:** Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's magisterial "Mass on the World" (*Hymn of the Universe*) exquisitely represents the viability of the numinous disguised in ordinary matter. ☉

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## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

For more details, visit  
<https://consciousharmony.org/>  
or call 512-347-9673

### SPECIAL EVENTS

†Gurdjieff Music

Nov 7 6pm

In-person and online

†Two-Day Commuter Prayer Retreat at CCH

Nov 12-13 8:30am-4pm

\$30 Register online

### MONTHLY

Caritas Donations

1st Sundays

Bring non-perishables to CCH or  
donate to [caritasofaustin.org](http://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

Wednesdays

†Contemplative Worship Service 6-7pm

Thursdays

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

Saturdays

\*Scriptorium noon

\*Compline 9-9:15pm

### DAILY

\*Centering Prayer Service 7-7:35am

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\*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

## OUR MONTHLY PRACTICE: CANDLE LIGHTING

The invention of the light bulb and the harnessing of electricity for domestic use brought to end the widespread and daily use of candles. Today, though we may still use candles to accompany our worship services or spiritual practices, most people don't normally light a candle daily. This month's practice is to do so.

The first candles we are aware of were created by the Romans around 500 BCE. Several hundred years later, candles were also created in China and India. For thousands of years, candles made civilized life possible, taming the darkness for domestic life and study. In addition to their practical use, candles also create a warm, beautiful and cozy ambiance. Candles tamed fire. In that way, candles are a kind of symbol or representation of the divine energy, scaled down to dwell with us. When Jesus said, *I am the light of the World*, one of the images his hearers surely must have imagined was the symbol of the candle.

Throughout this month, how can you intentionally practice lighting a candle daily? Perhaps use the morning or evening hour, before the sunrises and after the sun sets to light your candle. Consider purchasing a new large, white candle pillar to serve as your "Christ" candle this November. As you light your candle, you might explore placing an icon or sacred image by the candle to capture its light. Bernadette Roberts often said to people who asked her for prayer, that she would light her Christ candle in front of her Mary icon and remember them. Let's do likewise, in the month we honor and remember Bernadette's death, November 27, 2017. ☺

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## SUNDAY SERMON THEMES

November 7	Community Expressions of Gratitude, part 1
November 14	Community Expressions of Gratitude, part 2
November 21	Community Reading Conversation on Cynthia Bourgeault's <i>Eye of Heart</i>
November 28	The First Sunday of Advent



THE CHURCH of CONSCIOUS HARMONY

A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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## ADVENT

The liturgical season begins with Advent,  
a period of intense preparation to understand and accept  
the three comings of Christ.

The first is His historical coming in human weakness  
and the manifestation of His divinity in the world;  
the second is His spiritual coming in our inmost being;  
the third is His final coming at the end of time in His glorified humanity.  
... Suddenly we perceive a new way of seeing all reality.

Our old world view ends.

A new relationship God, ourselves and other people  
emerges based on the new level of understanding,  
perception and union with God we have been given.

... The coming of Christ into our conscious lives presupposes  
a presence of Christ that is already within us waiting to be awakened.

The Christmas-Epiphany mystery

invites us to take possession of what is already ours.

As Thomas Merton put it, we are 'to become what we already are.'

Thomas Keating, *The Mystery of Christ*

*'How can this be?'*

Luke 1:34