

Our Receptivity, Consent & Trust

**The Journey School
November 9, 2023**



Receptivity: The Work Perspective



What are we seeking to receive?

We aim to become receptive to the influences coming from our Higher Centers.

Our Higher Intellectual Center and Higher Emotional Center are fully developed and constantly working, but we do not hear them.

Maurice Nicoll equates our Higher Centers with the Conscious Circle of Humanity and "Greater Mind."

**Assistance, Blessing, Inspiration,
Guidance & Vivifying Force**

Receptivity: The Work Perspective



How do we become more receptive?

"Only by work on oneself."

Through the *purification* or *balancing* of our lower centers.

Maurice Nicoll says one definition of the Work is
"the preparation of lower centers for the reception of the Influences coming from Higher Centers..."

Our genuine Work efforts are never wasted.

Receptivity: The Work of the Spirit



How do these ideas relate with our theological tradition?

Maurice Nicoll connects our ability to hear Higher Centers to being “born of the Spirit.”

Beryl Pogson relates these higher influences in religious terms as the Holy Ghost.

Our reception of these higher influences guides our everyday discernment.

It is our connection to the Mind of Christ.

Receptivity: The Work of the Spirit



1 Corinthians 2:14-16

“The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject merely to human judgements, for,

‘Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’

But we have the mind of Christ.”

Receptivity: The Work of the Spirit



Three Types of People, According to Paul's Theology

Sarkinois (σαρκίνοις)

Psychikos (ψυχικός)

Pneumatikos (πνευματικός)

"The wind blows wherever it pleases.

You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.

So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

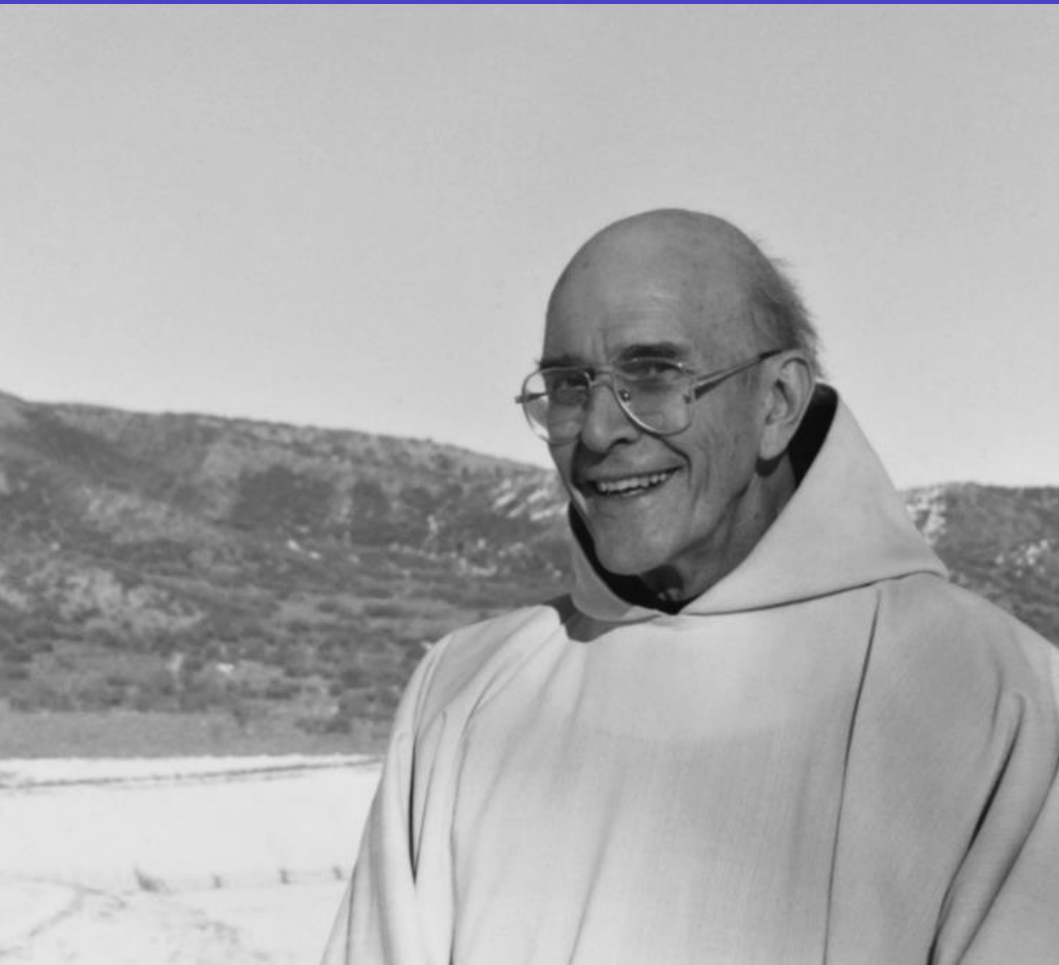
John 3:8

A night sky with the Milky Way galaxy visible, set against a dark landscape silhouette. The text is overlaid on the sky.

“The chief thing that separates us from God is the thought that we are separated from Him.”

Thomas Keating

Consent: Our "Yes" to God in Each Moment

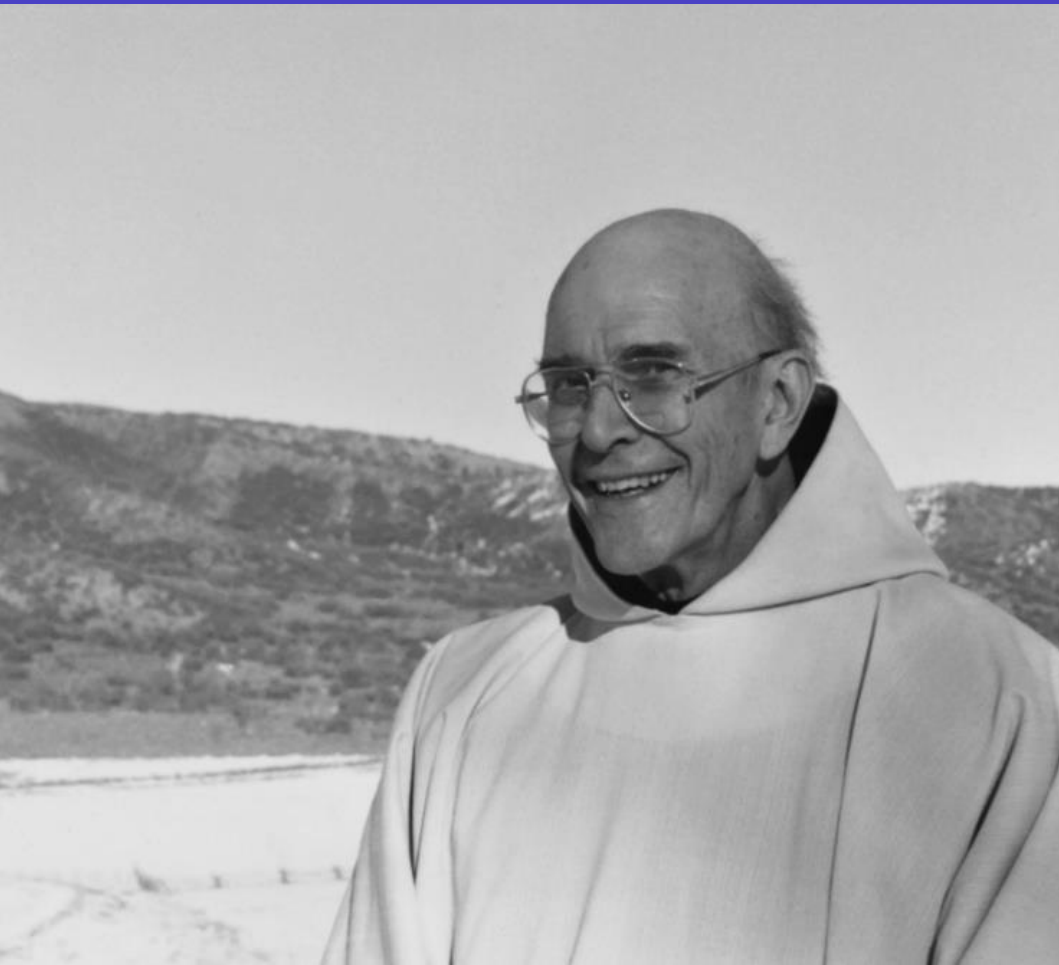


Consent in "Open Mind, Open Heart"

"An act of will expressing acceptance of someone, some thing, or some course of action; the manifestation of one's intention."

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to **consent to God's presence and action within.**
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly, and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your **consent to God's presence and action within.**

Consent: Our "Yes" to God in Each Moment



The Role of the Sacred Word

"The sacred word is a way of letting go of all thoughts. **This makes it possible for our spiritual faculties, which are attracted to interior silence, to move spontaneously in that direction.** Such a movement does not require effort. It only requires the willingness to let go of our ordinary preoccupations."

Maurice Nicoll: "Nature abhors a vacuum."

Cynthia Bourgeault: Centering Prayer is "kenosis in meditation form."

The Welcoming Prayer: Consent on the Go



The Welcoming Prayer is a method of consenting to God's presence and action in **our physical and emotional reactions** to events and situations in daily life.

The purpose of the Welcoming Prayer is to **deepen our relationship with God** through consenting in the ordinary activities of our day.

The Welcoming Prayer: Consent on the Go



Step 1: **Feel and sink into** what you are experiencing this moment in your body.

Step 2: **"Welcome"** what you are experiencing this moment in your body as an opportunity to consent to the Divine Indwelling.

Step 3: **Let go** by saying "I let go of my desire for security, affection, control and embrace this moment as it is."

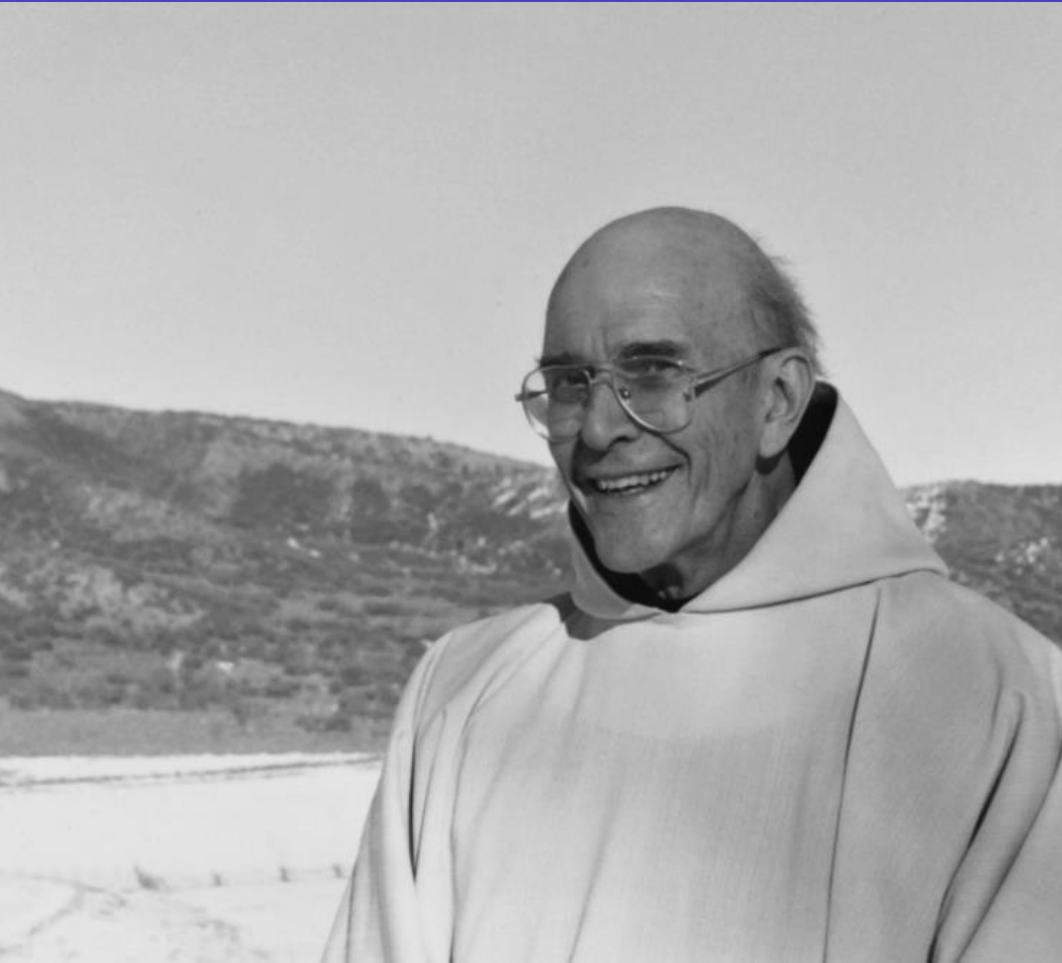
Consent over the Lifespan: The Four Consents



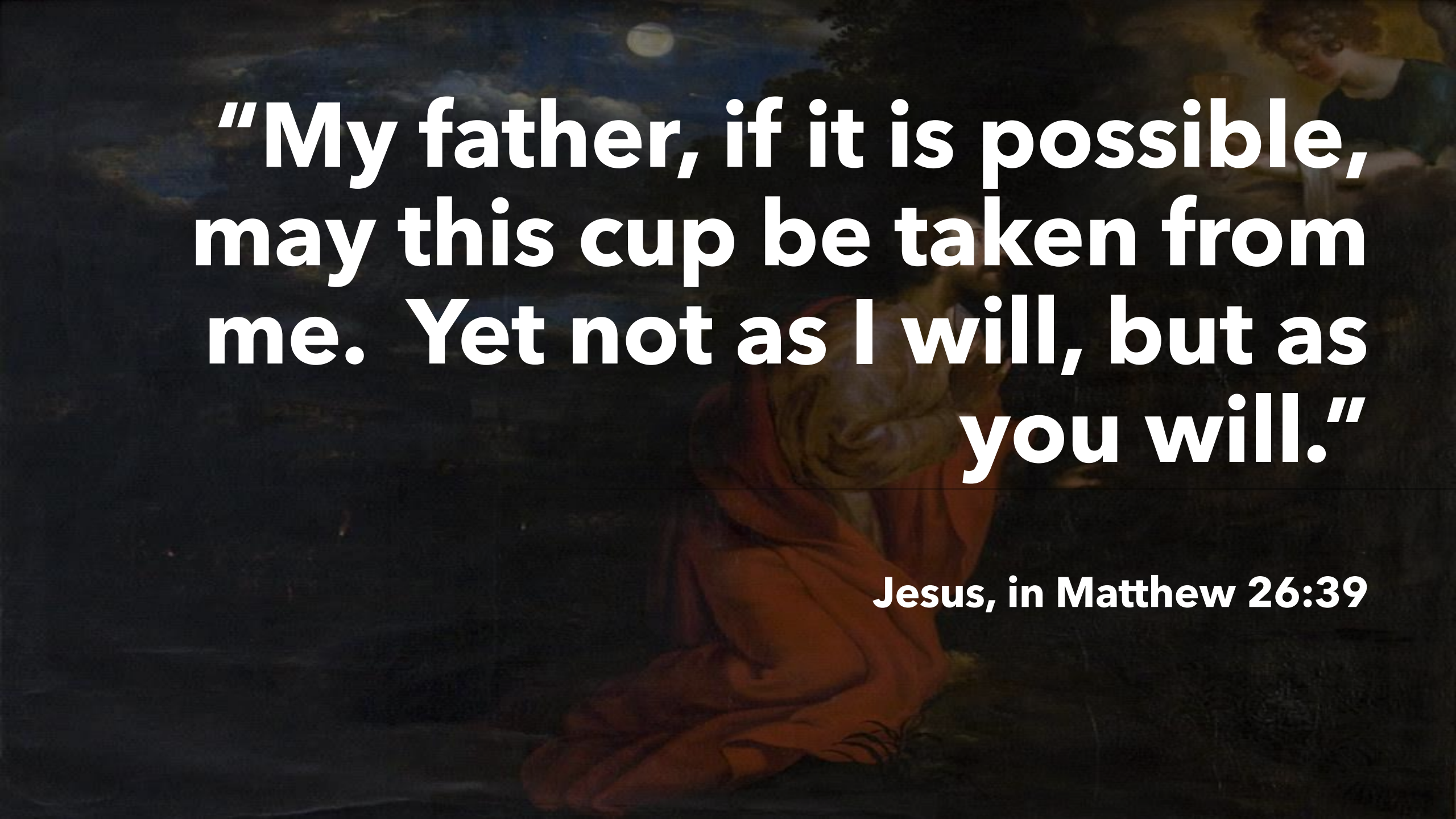
Thomas Keating's teaching, based on the theology of John S. Dunne:

1. Consent to the basic goodness of our nature with all its parts.
2. Consent to the full development of our being by activating our talents and creative energies.
3. Consent by accepting our non-being and diminutions of self that occur through illness, old age, and death.
4. Consent to be transformed.

Entrusting Ourselves to God



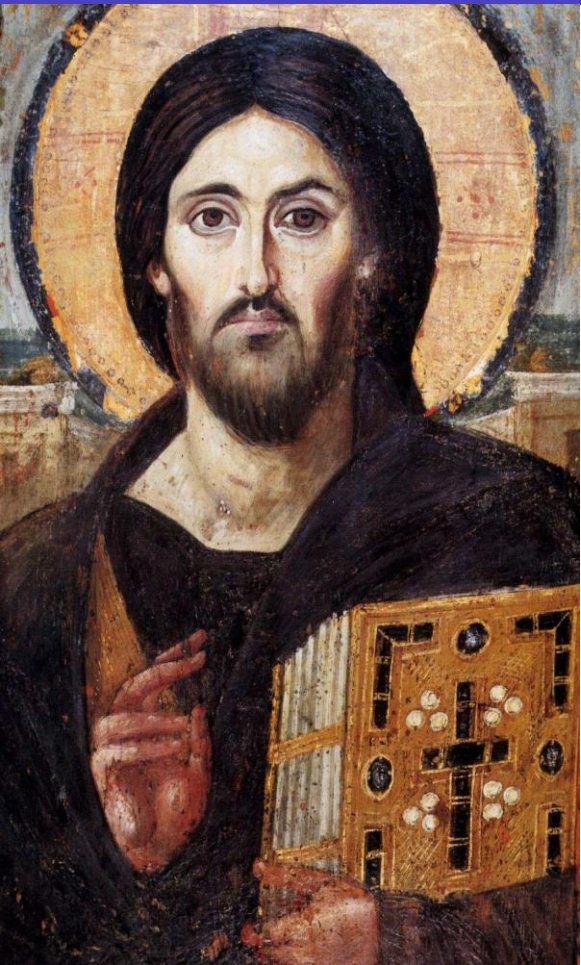
“The Christian spiritual path is based on a deepening trust in God. It is trust that first allows us to take the initial leap in the dark, to encounter God at the deeper levels of ourselves.” - Thomas Keating



**“My father, if it is possible,
may this cup be taken from
me. Yet not as I will, but as
you will.”**

Jesus, in Matthew 26:39

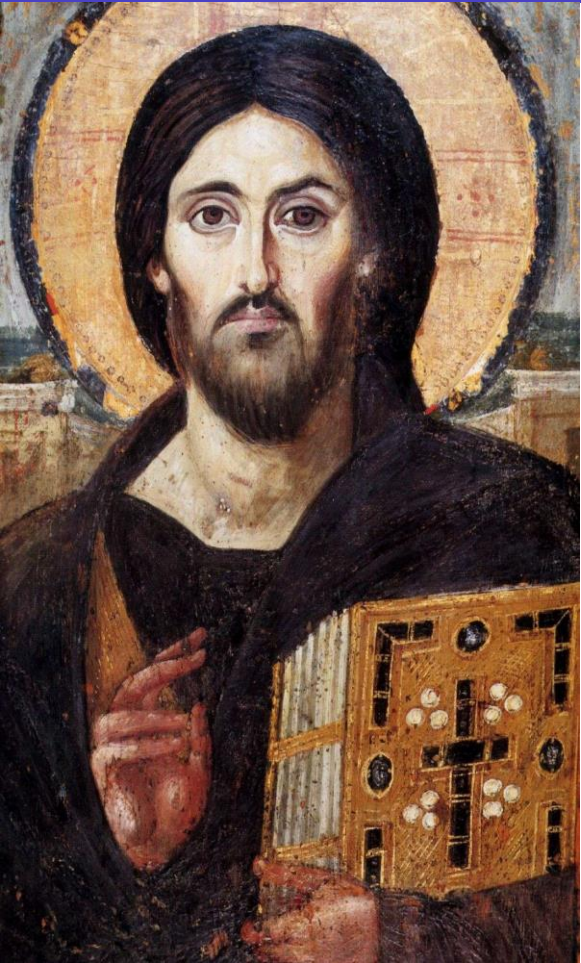
Cultivating Trust: Unceasing Prayer of the Heart



“Rejoice always, **pray without ceasing**,
give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

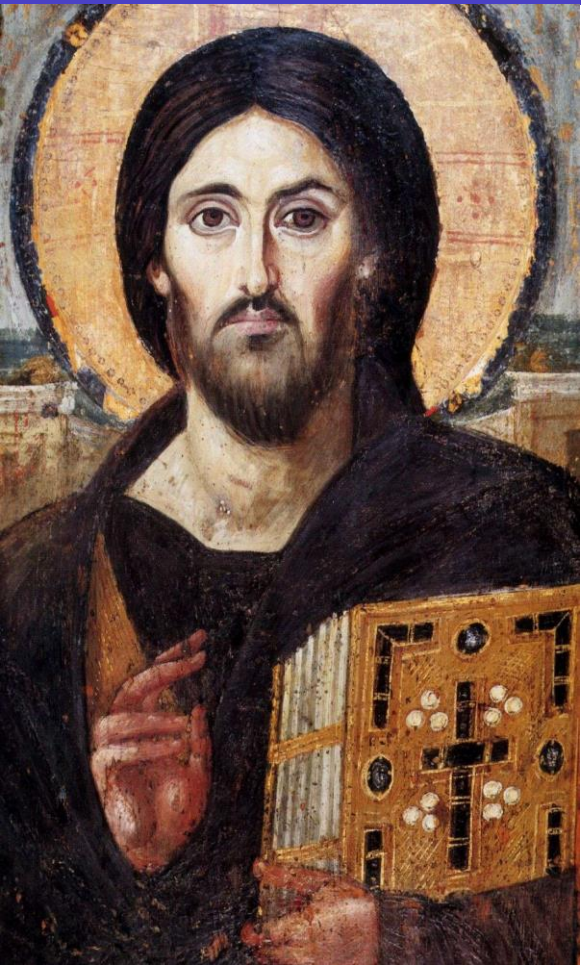
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Cultivating Trust: The Jesus Prayer



“Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of God,
have mercy on me,
a sinner.”

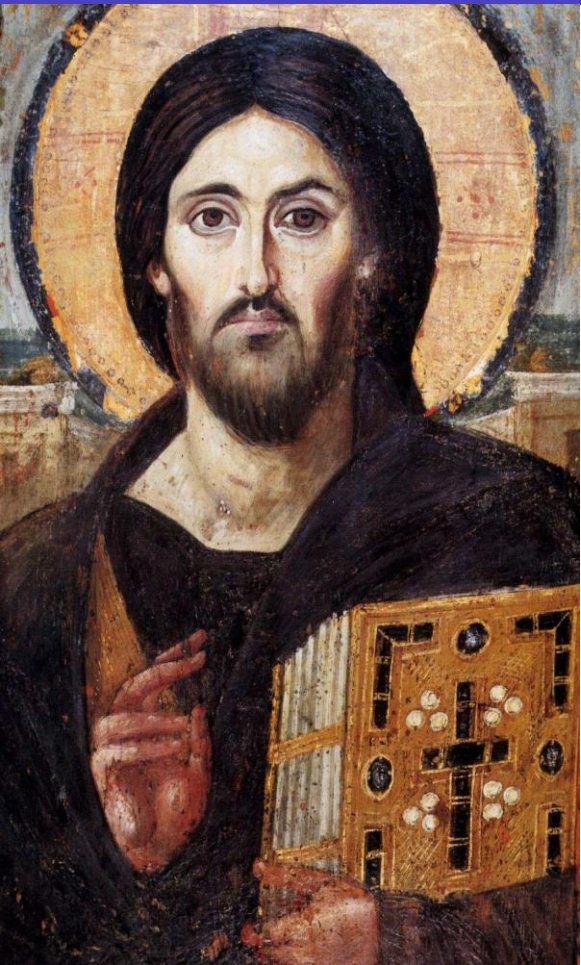
Cultivating Trust: The Jesus Prayer



“This form of prayer is a simple yet most effective means of establishing and strengthening the whole of the spiritual and ascetic life... in all our efforts and ascetic struggles, what we seek is **purification of the heart and restoration of the spirit.**”

- Theophan the Recluse

Cultivating Trust: The Jesus Prayer



“Humility is the key to this inner movement. It enables us to sense God’s Presence and help, and to welcome His gift of salvation. **It promotes confidence in God, trust that He will see us through times of chaos and tumult**, that He will be our Light when we walk through darkness, that He will comfort us in times of illness, spiritual struggle, and distress. All of this God offers us through the Prayer of Jesus.

- Archimandrite Placide Deseille

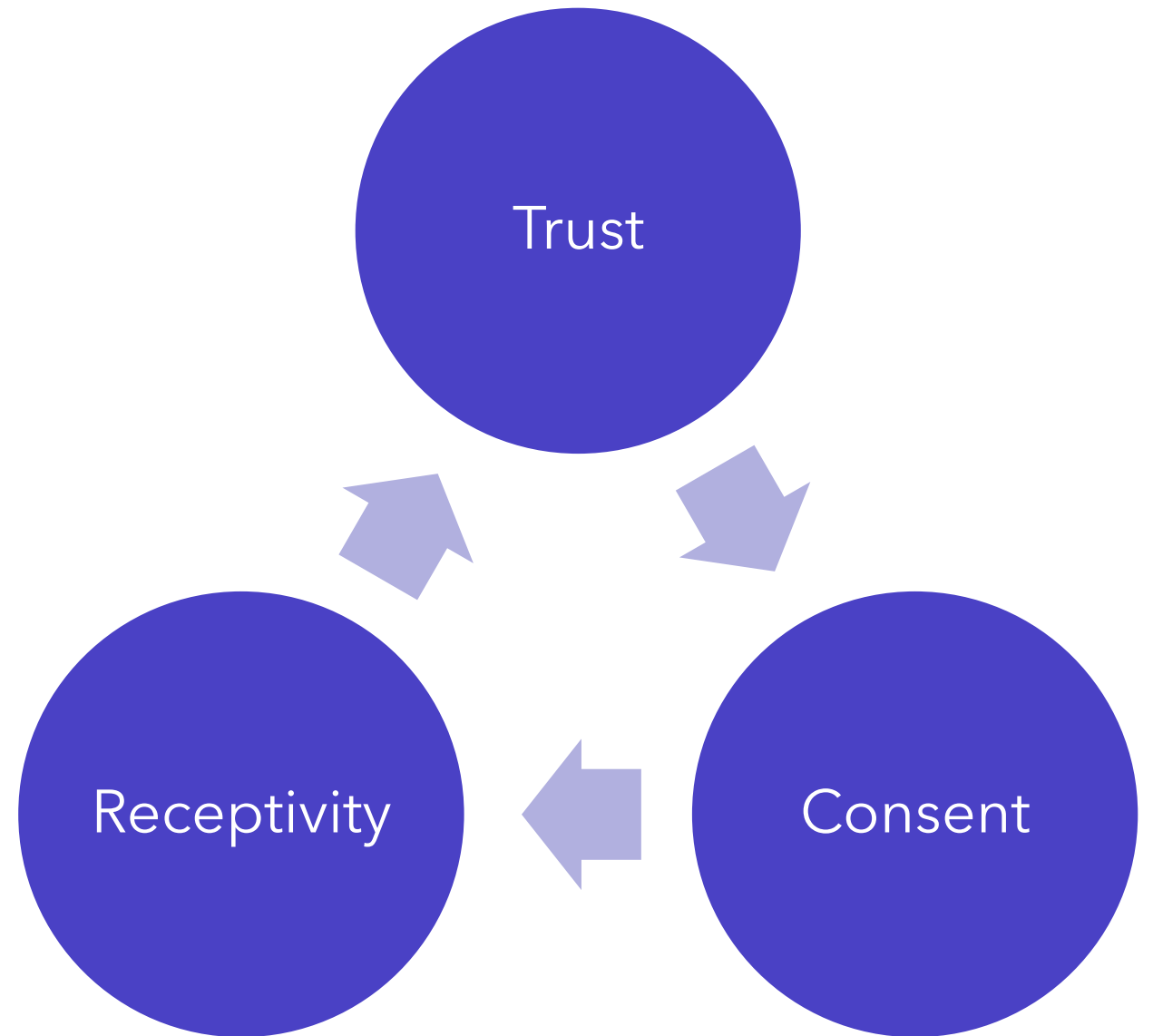
Our Engine of Transformation

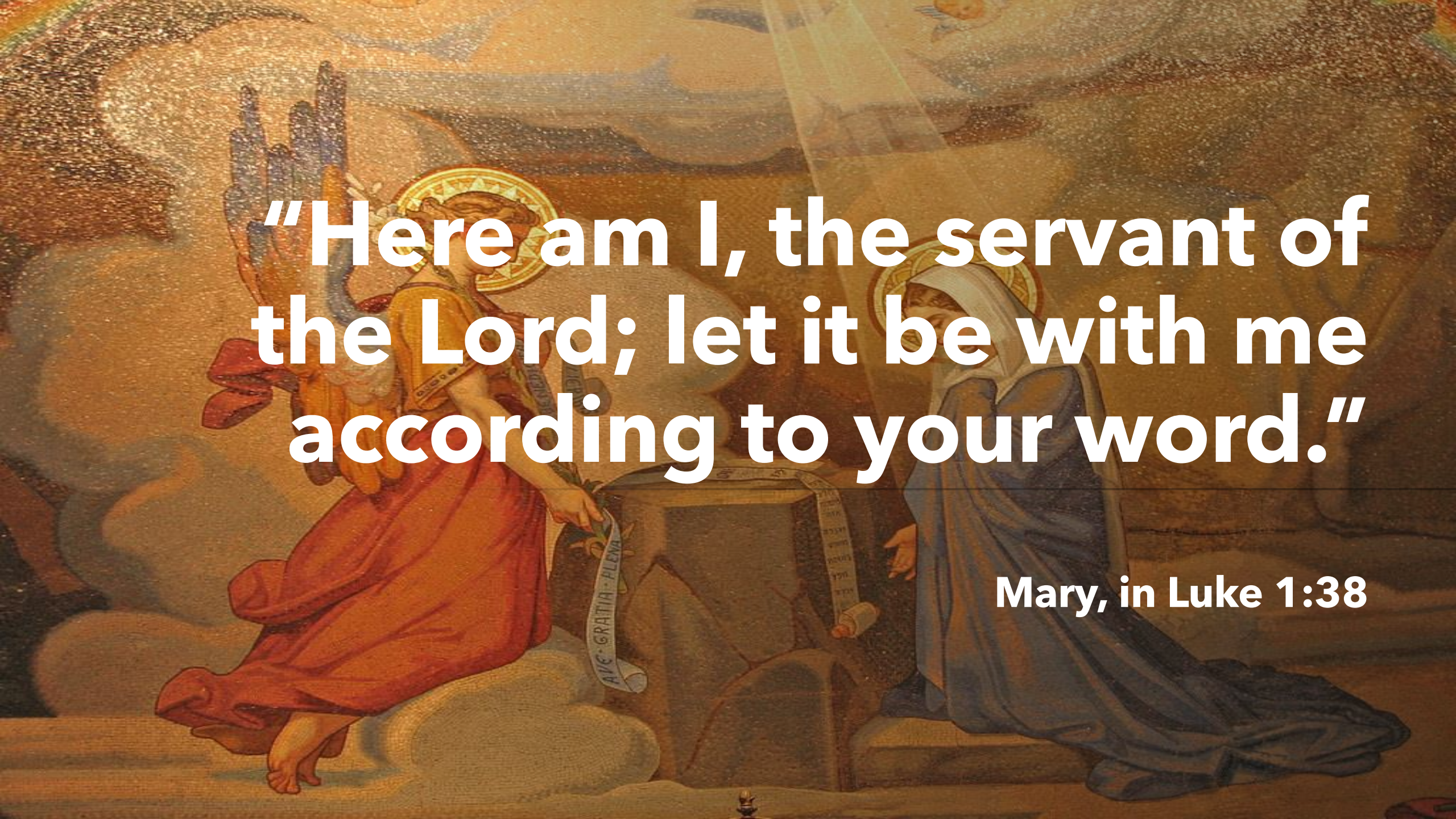
Through the cultivation of our trust in God, we are empowered to consent ever-more deeply.

Through our deepening consent, our emotional center becomes balanced and purified, which allows for greater receptivity from our Higher Centers and the Holy Spirit.

Through the direct experience of these graces (assistance, blessing, inspiration, guidance, and vivifying force), our trust and confidence in God grows.

Although this engine ultimately functions through God's grace, it is best fueled by an attitude of **humble willingness**.





**“Here am I, the servant of
the Lord; let it be with me
according to your word.”**

Mary, in Luke 1:38

Pedro Arrupe, SJ



**“More than ever I find myself in the hands of God.
This is what I have wanted all my life from my youth.
But now there is a difference;
The initiative is entirely with God.
It is indeed a profound spiritual experience
To know and feel myself so totally in God’s hands.”**