



THE CENTER
for Christian Spirituality

The Way to Love

8:45 a.m. + April 18, 2021 + Third Sunday of Easter

*When you forgive those who have wronged you, you free yourself from prison.
You take from your own heart the hook that has dragged you along behind those people across fields of years.*
John O'Donohue

Welcome

Centering in Wisdom

"Within"

*Within, within. Within my soul a treasure lies,
The God of heaven and earth resides within, within.
This temple built of flesh and bone,
Contains inside God's holy throne!
Within, within, within.*

*In faith. In fear. No matter what may come along,
Within my heart you sing a song of hope, of love.
A reassuring melody, that stirs from deep inside of me.
Within, within, within.*

Gospel Reading

John 20:19-23

*When it was evening on that Day, the First Day of the sabbaths,
and the doors were shut where the disciples had gathered for fear of the Jewish leaders,
Jesus came and stood in their midst and said, "Shalom to you. Peace to you."
After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced, having seen the Lord.
Then Jesus said to them again, "Shalom to you. Peace to you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Spirit of Holiness.
If you forgive the sins of any – if you release them from their sins, they are forgiven them – they are released.
If you retain the sins of any – if you hold on to them, they are retained."*

Meditation

Opening Up

"May My Peace Be with You"

*There are walls I've built for my protection,
Doors I've locked to hide away.
Through the power of resurrection,
You appear and I hear you say,
"May my peace be with you."*

*Your peace is the key to my unlocking.
To see the truth beyond my pain.
To move beyond the wounds I carry.
To face the world and then exclaim:
"May my peace be with you."*

Praying the Psalm

Psalm 51, Psalms for Praying

Have mercy on me, O Gracious One, according to Your steadfast Love.

According to Your abundant kindness, forgive me where my thoughts and deeds have hurt others.

Lead me in the paths of justice, guide my steps on paths of peace!

Teach me, that I may know my weaknesses, the shortcomings that bind me, the unloving ways that separate me, that keep me from recognizing Your life in me;

For I keep company with fear, and dwell in the house of ignorance.

Yet, I was brought forth in Love, and Love is my birthright.

You have placed Your truth in the inner being; therefore, teach me the wisdom of the heart.

Forgive all that binds me in fear, that I might radiate Love;

cleans me that Your Light might shine in me.

Fill me with gladness; help me to transform weakness into strength.

Look not on my past mistakes but on the aspirations of my heart.

Create in me a clean heart, O Gracious One and put a new and right spirit within me.

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Meditation

Cultivating Peace

"Yeshua, O Blessed One"

Yeshua, O Blessed One, May Your peace take root in me.

Yeshua, O Blessed One, May Your peace arise in me.

Praying the Psalm

Psalm 51, Psalms for Praying

Enfold me in the arms of Love, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit.

Restore in me the joy of Your saving grace, and encourage me with a new spirit.

Then I will teach others Your ways, and prisoners of fear will return to You.

Deliver me from the addictions of society, most Gracious One,

O keep me from temptation, that I may tell of your justice and mercy.

O Gracious One, open my lips and my mouth shall sing forth Your praise.

For you do not want sacrifice; You delight in our friendship with You.

A sacrifice most appropriate is a humble spirit;

a repentant and contrite heart, O Merciful One, is the gift You most desire.

O Most Gracious and Compassionate Friend, melt our hearts of stone,

break through the fears that lead us into darkness, and guide our steps into the ways of peace.

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Meditation

Resting in Silence

Contemplative Prayer is a Way to Love, a path and practice that enables us to love. In Contemplative Prayer we are asking for Love, to be able to receive and give Love. We begin by asking with our own body, sensing our own body here and now. We descend into the region of the heart, with our attention directed towards our heart. From this place, we breathe deeply and pray. If it helps, use a sacred word to help you descend into this silence (such as Beloved, Shalom, Mercy, Abba, Jesus, or Spirit) or a breath prayer, such as "Lord" (*inhale*) "have mercy" (*exhale*). If a thought, feeling, or sensation tries to take you away from this interior place, don't "hold on" to it – simply and gently release it by returning to your sacred word or breath prayer.

Receiving Peace

"Shalom"

Shalom, Shalom, Shalom, Shalom.

I leave you my peace. I leave you my peace.

I leave you my peace. I leave you my peace.

Holy Communion

Lord God, by the mystery of grace, You are present to us here.

May the glory of Your Name be the center on which our lives turn.

By the power of Your Love may we find in this bread and cup an invitation to step further into your kingdom.

May the glory of Your Name be the center on which our lives turn.

We are broken and hungry, fearful and ignorant. We withhold forgiveness from others while receiving it from You. Forgive us and feed us through this holy meal.

May the glory of Your Name be the center on which our lives turn.

Hear us as we pray:

Our Father, dwelling in the heavenly realms,

may the glory of Your Name be the center on which our lives turn. . . .

Manifest Your kingdom realm,

and cause Your every purpose to be fulfilled on earth just as it is fulfilled in heaven. . . .

We acknowledge You as our Provider

of all we need each day. . . .

Forgive us the wrongs we have done,

as we ourselves release forgiveness to those who have wronged us. . . .

Rescue us every time we face tribulation,

and set us free from evil. . . .

For You are the King,

who rules with power and glory forever. . . .

Compassionate God, wherever our journey takes us, may it lead us away from evil and closer to you. Pour out Your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup. Consecrate us all for your service – to be transmitters of Your shalom in the world.

May the glory of Your Name be the center on which our lives turn.

Meditation of Grace, Love and Light

Merciful Jesus, Living Christ, hear our prayer.

May I be well and free, safe and peaceful.

May I ever experience God's grace, love and light.

And may I awaken to the beauty of my true nature, a beloved child of God. . . .

May you be well and free, safe and peaceful.

May you ever experience God's grace, love and light.

And may you awaken to the beauty of your true nature, a beloved child of God. . . .

May my friends be well and free, safe and peaceful.

May my friends ever experience God's grace, love and light.

And may my friends awaken to their true nature, God's beloved children. . . .

May my enemies be well and free, safe and peaceful.

May my enemies ever experience God's grace, love and light.

And may my enemies awaken to their true nature, God's beloved children. . . .

May all things be well and free, safe and peaceful, and at ease.

May all things ever experience God's grace, love and light.

And may all things awaken to the beauty of their true nature, God's beloved creation. . . .

These things we ask in the Name of the Living Christ. Amen.

Receiving Peace

"Shalom"

Shalom, Shalom, Shalom, Shalom.

I leave you my peace. I leave you my peace.

I leave you my peace. I leave you my peace.

Receiving a Good Word

Thank you for worshipping with us today, please register your attendance:

*If you are worshipping online, please text the word **center** to 75787*

*If you are worshipping in person, please text the word **chapel** to 75787*

For further Contemplative Resources please visit

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/6902676>