



The CENTER  
for Christian Spirituality

## *Sensing God*



*"Take A Deep Breath" by Mary Balagia*

8:45 a.m. + February 26, 2023 + First Sunday of Lent

May your body be blessed.

May you realize that your body is a faithful and beautiful friend of your soul.

And may you be peaceful and joyful and recognize that your senses are sacred thresholds.

May you realize that holiness is mindful, gazing, feeling, hearing, and touching.

May your senses gather you and bring you home.

May your senses always enable you to celebrate the universe  
and the mystery and possibilities in your presence here.

*~ John O'Donohue*

## Crossing the Threshold

### Opening Up

*“Open the Eyes of My Heart”*

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.  
Open the eyes of my heart.  
I want to see you.  
I want to see you.*

*To see your presence all around,  
Shining in the heart of creation.  
Unveil your power and love,  
And let my heart see your salvation.*

### The Morning Psalm

*contemplative adaptation of Psalm 121 (Nan Merrill)*

*My heart's eyes behold your Divine Glory!  
From whence does my help come?  
My help comes from You, who created heaven and earth.  
You strengthen and uphold me,  
You, who are ever by my side.  
Behold! You who watch over the nations  
will see all hearts Awaken to the Light.  
For You are the Great Counselor;  
You dwell within all hearts,  
that we might respond to the Universal Heart –  
Like the sun, that nourishes us by day,  
like the stars that guide the wayfarer at night.  
In You we shall not be afraid of the darkness,  
For You are the Light of our life.  
May You keep us in our going out and our coming in  
from this time forth and forevermore.*

### Opening Up

*“Open the Eyes of My Heart”*

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.  
Open the eyes of my heart.  
I want to see you.  
I want to see you.*

*To see your presence all around,  
Shining in the heart of creation.  
Unveil your power and love,  
And let my heart see your salvation.*

### Reflecting on Scripture

**1 Kings 18:41-44a**

*Elijah said to Ahab, 'Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of rushing rain.' So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel; there he bowed himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. He said to his servant, 'Go up now, look attentively towards the sea.' He went up and looked attentively, and said, 'There is nothing.' Then Elijah said, 'Turn back,' seven times. At the seventh time he said, 'Behold, a little cloud no bigger than a person's hand is rising out of the sea.'*

## Meditation

### Song of Response

*“Things Unseen”*

*Life is more than all we see. Faith is more than all we know.  
For we hope in things unseen, trusting God to help us grow.  
God help us see what we're blind to, hear the cries we ignore.  
See beyond just this moment, to the glory in store.  
Grant us faith in the darkness, in the cold of the night,  
To see goodness and light.*

### Reflecting on Scripture

*Genesis 1:29, 31a*

*God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.... God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.'*

## Meditation

### Song of Response

*“Heaven Touches Earth”*

*Heaven touches earth, every single moment:  
In the setting sun, the whispers on the wind.  
The gentle fall of rain, the fragrance when it's over.  
We will taste and we will see and know that God is good.*

*May we sense your presence, O God.  
May we sense your presence, O God.  
Make our senses gateways to all that you are.  
May we sense your presence, O God.*

### Resting in the Silence

During these 5 minutes of silence, simply rest in God's abiding and loving presence in this moment. Simply be here now. Descend into this Silence. There is nothing you need to do. Just let go. Let be. Relax. Breathe deeply. Sense your body. If it helps, use a breath prayer to help you descend into this silence, such as “Lord” (inhale), “Jesus” (exhale) or a name for the Divine, or simply the word “Behold.”

## Holy Communion

### Receiving a Good Word



### Worship Response

Today @ 10:00 a.m. | The Anchor House

*Join us in The Anchor House as we reflect on the themes of today's service, what arose for us, and what questions we have.*

### Community Gathering

Today @ 11:30 | St. Arnolds

*Join us for food and fellowship with friends from our contemplative community. We will meet in our usual spot on the patio at Saint Arnold Brewing Company. If you plan to join us, please let Haley know so we can save you a seat. She will be at the welcome table in the foyer after the service.*



## Sensing God: Encountering God through the Senses – A Lenten Experience

March 1 – April 5, Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m. | The Anchor House

*The senses are thresholds to the heart and springtime is a feast of the senses. Join us as we dive deeper into how the senses are used in Scripture and in the ministry of Jesus. This will be a time of teaching and experience (theoria and praxis). Come with an open heart. All are welcome! There is no cost for this experience, but please register by scanning the QR code to the right.*



## The Way of the Healer: A Guided Silent Retreat

Saturday, March 4 | 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | The Anchor House

*For March's guided silent retreat, we will open ourselves to the ministry of restoration and wholeness – in both the inner journey and the outer journey. We begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. with an introduction of the day leading into our first "sitting meditation" for Centering Prayer taking place at 9:00 a.m. We observe silence throughout the day (lunchtime too) as well as other group Centering Prayer gatherings at 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Along with plenty of time for reading and reflection, walking, and space for prayerful art, participants will have the opportunity for a chair massage by a massage therapist. A simple lunch is provided. Cost of the Retreat is \$20 and includes the price of lunch. We don't want anyone to miss out because of pricing. Contact Haley for information on scholarships. Register by scanning the QR code to the right.*



### Our Staff

**Haley Brown** – Ministry Assistant & Director of gastrochurch  
**Peter Johns** – Associate Director

**Rev. Rachel Sciretti** – Associate Pastor  
**Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr.** – Pastor of The Center

*Thank you for worshipping with us today. Please register your attendance.  
If you are worshipping online, please text the word **center** to (844) 474-0707  
If you are worshipping in person, please text the word **chapel** to (844) 474-0707  
For information about The Center for Christian Spirituality and upcoming events,  
visit: [www.TheCenterFCS.org](http://www.TheCenterFCS.org).*