



The CENTER
for Christian Spirituality

Revelations of Divine Love

8:45 a.m. + April 23, 2023

And with this sweet beholding he showed his blissful heart split in two,
and as he rejoiced he showed to my understanding, in part, the blessed Godhead,
as much as was his will at that time, strengthening my poor soul to understand what can be said,
that is the endless love which was without beginning and is and always shall be.

And with this our good Lord said most blissfully:

See how I love you...

Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love, chapter 24

Acknowledging our Needs

*We come here to worship,
We come here to pray.
Aware of our weakness,
In need of your grace.
Some of us hiding,
Some of us found.
Standing together upon holy ground.*

“Boundless Love”

*Boundless love and beautiful grace,
Filling this place,
Filling our hearts.
In our delight and in our despair,
Still you are there,
Flooding our lives with boundless love.*

Gospel Reading

John 20:19-20, 24-25

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus appeared and stood in the midst and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced having seen the Lord...

... But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

Praying with Thomas

from *Psalm 77* Nan Merrill

*In the day of trouble I seek the Beloved;
In the night my hand is stretched out in prayer;
my soul yearns to be comforted.*

*How well I remember years past,
when You were a companion close by.*

*I commune with my heart all through the night;
I meditate, my spirit seeking its Friend:*

*“Will You abandon me forever, and leave me comfortless in my distress?
Where is your steadfast love that made my soul to sing?
Are your promises empty, that I feel so alone?”*

*I call to mind the closeness of my Friend;
yes, I remember the joy of the Beloved’s presence.
I contemplate in the Silence,
recalling how You led me along the Way;
For your Way, O Beloved, is holy.*

*There is no other like You!
You are the One who will bring us to wholeness,
You manifest your Love to all who call upon You.*

Song of Response

“When my World Falls Apart”

*When my world falls apart, I will keep on believing,
Though what I believe in may falter or grow.
Throughout trials and struggles and questions and failings,
My faith will keep changing but this truth I know:*

*You are God. You are good. You are gracious and loving,
And I’m still discovering how wondrous you are.
If I take time to see I can learn more about you,
And though I may doubt you, you never doubt me.*

Gospel Reading

John 20:26-29

After eight days, his disciples were again within, and Thomas was with them.

Jesus appears – although the doors were shut – and he stood in the midst. Then he said, “Peace be with you.”

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Be not faithless but faithful.”

Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

Meditation

Song of Response

“Only Be Still”

*The Lord abides with you.
Only be still, only be still.
Believe and you will see.
Only be still, only be still.
Though fears and doubts surround,
Just wait on holy ground.
For God is all around,
Only be still, only be still.*

Meditation

Song of Response

“Only Be Still”

*The Lord abides with you.
Only be still, only be still.
Believe and you will see.
Only be still, only be still.
Though fears and doubts surround,
Just wait on holy ground.
For God is all around,
Only be still, only be still.*

Prayer of the Heart

Contemplative Prayer is sometimes called the Prayer of the Heart. We enter our own “cave” of the heart by “stooping down” in humility, 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 the place of the heart in silence (such as Peace, Shalom, Beloved, Abba, Jesus, or Spirit) or a breath prayer, such as Thomas’ confession: “My Lord” (*inhale*) “and My God” (*exhale*). If a thought, feeling, or sensation tries to take you away from this interior place, don’t “cling” to it – simply and gently let it go by returning to your heart with the aid of your sacred word or breath prayer. In this way, we become more open and receptive to Divine Love.

Song of Response

“Without Seeing You”

*Without seeing you, we love you;
Without touching you, we embrace;
Without knowing you, we follow;
Without seeing you, we believe.*

Holy Communion

Revelations of Divine Love



Freedman's Town Pilgrimage

Saturday, April 29th | 9:00am - 2:00pm

Join us for a spiritual pilgrimage to see, hear, and honor the foundation and founders of an important part of our city, established around Faith, Family and Community. Freedmen's Town (aka Fourth Ward and Mother Ward) is a critical part not only of Houston's and Texas's history, but our nation's history. It is the city's oldest established African American community and encompasses homes, churches, and parks built over 150 years ago. In many ways, we stand on the shoulders of these original members of our city and our faith. For more information, please contact Noel Denison (noel@ttr-engr.com) or Nancy Sterling (nlsterling@aol.com).

Fighting Human Trafficking through Card-Making

Saturday, April 29th | 9:00am - 1:00pm | The Anchor House

Calling all CREATIVES - Join us for the work of ACTION through a card making event to support and encourage the work of United Against Human Trafficking and International Justice Mission. Join us to learn more about these two amazing ministries and their work of Justice in our world. Both organizations work to help fight Human trafficking and Modern-day slavery. We'll gather to make inspirational and encouraging greeting/ art cards that are distributed to victims of trafficking and cards made to support the staff in this hard work of Justice. For more information please contact: Robin Brady: robinbrady0330@gmail.com or Mary Wenzel: artqua5815@gmail.com.

May Guided Silent Retreat with Julian of Norwich

Saturday, May 6 | 8:30am - 2:00pm | The Anchor House | \$20

For May's guided silent retreat, we will open ourselves to the life and spirituality of Julian of Norwich and her book Revelations of Divine Love. There will be plenty of time for reading and reflection, prayerful walking, and space for prayerful art. Participants will receive handouts with many readings from her book for lectio divina as well as reflective questions. Julian will be one of our primary spiritual guides on our October pilgrimage. A simple lunch is provided. To register use the QR code. The 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 at hbrown@chapelwood.org.



"Saints & Pilgrims: A Pilgrimage along the Coast of East England"

October 16-27, 2023

Journey in the footsteps of medieval British saints and pilgrims along the eastern coast of England. There are three primary anchor pilgrimage sites and saints: Julian of Norwich, Hilda of Whitby, and Cuthbert of Lindisfarne. Along the way we will also visit the Shrine of Our Lady in the town of Walsingham (which was a major pilgrimage site in the medieval period); Rievaulx Abbey, home of St. Aelred; and Durham Cathedral. We conclude our pilgrimage in Edinburgh. This contemplative pilgrimage will be an opportunity to deepen your spirituality through exploring the literary texts as well as the historical contexts of these great British saints of medieval Christianity. To reserve a spot please see Michael or Peter for a Registration Form, the deposit is \$300. For more information go to www.thecenterfcs.org/pilgrimage.

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.