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# THE MARK

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



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# THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD

by Tim Cook

Over the vast span of human social and cultural evolution, various types of governing and organizing systems have held groups and families together for purposes of protection, commerce and cultural continuity. King and kingdom are *types* that once flourished and whose remnants can still be seen even to our day in countries, states or territories ruled by a king or queen. When there is a kingdom, it must always have a ruler. In history, the ideal king has represented the stability and power that holds the center of the kingdom and created order in the body politic. A good king was much appreciated because he or she served the country and ensured its survival. The country, in turn, protected their ruler and loyal knights would gladly give their lives to ensure the survival of the ruler and protect the kingdom's subjects. They were all – kings, knights and subjects – in it together.

Jesus spoke of a kingdom that also has a king. But unlike the realms revealed to us by our senses where earthly kings hold power, the kingdom to which Christ

invites us is absolutely invisible to all our senses; we'll never see this king and yet He and His power are absolutely present, always and everywhere to everyone. To actually enter this kingdom we must be willing to acknowledge and serve its king as loyal subjects and perhaps even courageous knights.

The King of the Kingdom of Heaven is Love. Love's invisible kingdom is within each of us right now and it always has been. The question for me to ask myself every day, many times a day is, "Am I actually as eager as I tell myself I am, to enter that blessed Kingdom of Heaven?" Am I willing to make Love my king. A servant of the king is devoted to the king and the king's wishes or else he is not relating to the king as King. If my king is Love, my actions and thoughts must be at the service of my king or I am not under the kings' authority and not a citizen of his kingdom.

Like an earthly king, Divine Love doesn't explain itself. It is the power behind all the lesser powers in our lives. Love is perfectly unreasonable and so absolutely

trustworthy. Once it has touched us within our deep interior hearts, we see no other value to serve and obey in our lives than this invisible king. We have all seen sobering accounts of Divine Love's power in history books. They remind us that the only true value a *real human being* **can** serve is love. Sometimes ordinary people have to make choices about who they will serve knowing all the while that they really have no choice. They have no master but love, Love they are willing to die for rather than participate in events that dishonor their divinely given human life.

When I think of the Beatitude *blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness* I am immediately reminded of the early Christians who were sacrificed as sport in the Roman Colosseum and so on down through the ages of history, more recently as Christians like Franz Jagerstatter, a prosperous German Catholic farmer, husband and father of three who chose beheading by the Nazi regime rather than conscription into the army his soul would not let him

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serve. Maximilian Kolbe gave his life to save another prisoner from the Nazis. Easy to recall too from that same nightmare of inhumanity are Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran Pastor, and Alfred Delp, a Roman Catholic priest, or later Fr. Walter Cizac in the gulags of Russia. There are countless others. These are simply people who found themselves constitutionally unable to allow their lives to participate in anything less than Love. These are the folks that are closest to my memory because they come from my tribe. They are my kind. But, I must be certain that simply because these are the names that come first to my mind when I consider persecution for righteousness that I don't assume that righteousness is solely a Christian virtue. It is and has always gone on all over the world. Nor do I assume that loss of life or freedom is the only persecution there is or that we average Westerners have no persecutions to work with. But I do not view these memorable people as what we would ordinarily think of as heroes who perform

extraordinary feats in the world as revealed by the senses. They were simply subjects utterly loyal to their invisible King and they lived and still live in His Kingdom.

We make countless choices every day, and every choice we make reveals to ourselves who or what king we are serving and which kingdom we are choosing to live in. Spiritual growth inevitably involves changes in the way we live and act in the world and in the things that interest us. As the ever-deepening, ever-more attractive magnetism of the Spirit within reveals our true Christ identity, we will very likely lose interest in many of the things we were formerly fascinated with. As our values change we may discover our family dynamics may be strained as our growing soul becomes increasingly less able to participate in unhealthy relationship patterns that have been frozen in place for decades. The temptation to return to the familiar, old, worn-out, false-self, behavioral patterns competes for our attention and allegiance with the Divine Indwelling and we are

faced with real choices that are often difficult to make. Change, though often uncomfortable, is a necessity for growth in Spirit.

But let's remember that we have nothing but useless unnecessary suffering to lose and the promise of *beatitude* to receive. According to Fr. Thomas Keating the best way to understand the meaning of that word, beatitude, is "Oh how happy you will be." We are only, ever, truly, deeply happy when we are in right relationship to the right now Reality of our invisible Heavenly King. God is always present within us and all around us, and He is infinitely more "us" than we are ourselves.

Ultimate Reality is always here and now. It is always within us as the simple, silent, still Presence, waiting for our attention and trust. Righteousness is actually a matter of being balanced in the invisible center consciousness of Christ and not under the extreme social and family pressures that polarize and divide us into dualistic, separative and combative categories. During this election season we will have

*continued on page 4*

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# INTERIOR PERSECUTION

by Barbara Cook

A wise man once said, “You may be right, but there’s a pretty good chance that you are right for the wrong reasons.” That is why one of the first things Fr. Thomas Keating advises us to be aware of on our spiritual journey is that in Christianity, motivation is everything. It is not what I do, but *why* I do it that makes all the difference.

I have to learn to be aware of just where my motives are coming from. Are they moved by the three main energy centers of my false self (security and survival, affection and esteem, and power and control) or by mythic membership in a group? These are the self-centered motives of the false self and we are all influenced by them more than we imagine. They have been moving us and we’ll continue to be moved by them until we begin our spiritual journey in earnest. The center of the True Self is God and its motivation is self-giving love just like God. We all have a personal false self, and deeper within, we each share the one True Self. The false self is self-serving. The True Self serves God and the wholeness of all being. The twice-daily practice of prayer helps us to heal the deep

wounds that lie beneath selfish behavior and join in God’s love.

In considering the role of righteousness in my own life this month, I have been doing a lot of self-observation, praying and listening ... maybe I am right, but for the wrong reasons. If I notice that there is a hard-edge interiorly, I can be sure that it is for the wrong reason usually in defense of a position, which indicates that it’s probably motivated by a wish for power and control. I am just glad to be aware of it. A friend once told me that she had learned that whenever God makes something known to us, it is done in Light and Love, even if a person doesn’t like what they see, it isn’t cruel or

hard. But when false self or evil expresses, it is harsh and has a real sense of accusation and a lingering judgement. That has been a very good tool for discernment for me.

My experience is that the more light I get in any situation, the more God or good I see in it. Extending that light to the world of my relationships enables me to participate in God’s Kingdom of Heaven, in Divine Love. I’m sure many of you are also working through a personal, interior persecution for the sake of righteousness. We’re learning to discern what kind of righteousness we are serving, self-righteousness or Love. I pray we may all experience the Kingdom. ☸

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*continued from page 3*

several months of conversational opportunities. They will bring us many tempting offers to defend or attack political positions and points of view. A more just, **righteous** and faith-based response would be to lovingly listen to those who would rather stay divided and to respond by avoiding the wrangle entirely by redirecting the entire conversation to more loving content. We don’t

have to die physically to serve loyally in God’s Kingdom, though we may feel persecuted when we struggle against inner reactivity to remain silent, centered and composed around election hysteria. It is entirely possible that some of us will discover that we can live out this election in the Kingdom of Heaven. God can handle His world without our help but we all need His help. And we are all in this together. ☸



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*Come, O you blessed of my Father!* Matthew 25:34

## ANNUAL AIM: BLESSED

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

A HIDDEN GIFT OF PERSECUTION by Peter Haas

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Rooted in Christ ...  
they not only enter into the peace  
of Christ but become sources  
of the divine life and peace for others.  
The graced energy received from God,  
like an everflowing stream,  
is shared with those with whom  
they live and far beyond.  
Through them, God is pouring  
the divine light, life, and love  
into the human family.

Thomas Keating, *Invitation from God*

Christianity cannot be reduced  
to any kind of worldly program for  
social betterment or moral rearmament  
or intellectual advancement  
or artistic sensitization  
or spiritual renewal or whatever.

It gathers up all such things,  
but puts them in a larger context  
which both relativizes them  
and pushes them further.

This is why Christianity is an  
uncomfortable religion.

It requires a head for heights  
and a taste for infinity.

Simon Tugwell, *The Beatitudes: Soundings in  
Christian Traditions*

*I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of  
Christ on behalf of His body.*

Colossians 1:24

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Typically, I don't perceive  
myself as someone who has been  
persecuted for *any* sake. Truth be  
told, as a Number Four on the  
Enneagram, I tend to ensure and  
guard my comfort at any cost,  
ensuring safety and ease long before  
any persecution might begin. But I  
do recall an experience that left me  
pondering my role in and response  
to persecution.

The event occurred last year on  
the first hot night of spring. I had  
to stop to get gas in downtown  
San Antonio. The gas station was  
located in what appeared to be a  
not so safe area – a neighborhood  
I would normally avoid, especially  
at night.

After the winter months, lots  
of people were out and about. The  
city felt abuzz with an intensified  
energy. As I stood beside my car  
filling the gas tank, I noticed a  
young couple, perhaps in their mid-  
twenties, standing at the nearby bus  
stop, waiting. They had three young  
children with them, one in a stroller.  
What caught my attention was that  
the young man was screaming at his  
wife. And not only that, he was also  
physically grabbing her and shaking  
her. It was a hard scene to watch. I  
started to feel indignant. A stream  
of thoughts occurred: "How dare  
he treat her that way. What is his  
problem?" My emotions kicked in  
and my heart started to race. Parts



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of me wanted to help her and the kids. But how?

I finished pumping gas, got in the car and decided to drive up to the bus stop and say something to the young man from the safety of my car. I admit, at this point, I had forgotten about what the Work of Inner Christianity calls the Law of Second Force, or what others might simply call “unintended consequences.” As I drove up, the young man stopped screaming at his wife, and looked at me. His wife looked down at the ground. Since I hadn’t planned on what I would say, I heard myself saying, “Is there a problem here?” The young man coldly responded “no,” and then looked away from me, back at his wife. That was the moment I should have left, but I thought I knew what “righteousness” was in this situation. I felt indignant. I decided he needed to be informed *by me* right then and there that his behavior was wrong. So I said, “It doesn’t look like everything is OK.”

Clearly, in that moment, that was not what the young man needed to hear because his face instantly contorted with rage. His eyes flared and he lurched at me through the passenger side window. The only things I remember thinking was that I hoped he didn’t have a knife or gun in his hands,

and that if he did, I could just pull away fast. He couldn’t reach me with his arm, so he backed out of the car, lobbing f-bombs at me and kicking the side of my new car. It sounded like the whole passenger side was getting hammered in, and I remember thinking that it must really be hurting his foot to kick my car so hard. At that point, in the flush of adrenaline, I just slowly drove away, checking my rearview mirror to see if he was following me. It took me a couple of hours to calm down and I found myself reviewing the event to discover how I could have responded differently. Here are a few of the insights I learned from this situation:

#### THE PERSECUTOR CAN QUICKLY BECOME THE PERSECUTED

Clearly the young man’s behavior was violent and negative – in word and deed – toward his wife, his children, to me and to himself. What was not as evident to me, at the time, was that pointing out his “not-OK-ness” to him in the way I did made him doubly wrong. The persecutor became, in a certain sense, the persecuted. My words were shaming. They boxed him in and aggravated the situation more. I was not a peacemaker.

While I perhaps temporarily helped re-direct the young man’s

anger at me and not his wife, I did *not* help foster love and empathy in the overall situation. What would have happened if I had first said something like, “It sure is hot out here tonight. You look like you’ve been waiting for the bus a long time. Do you want a ride home?”

As I reflected on the event, I tried to imagine what it was like to be him or to externally consider as it’s known in the Work. Perhaps his family had been out all day. Perhaps the baby was crying. Perhaps he was hot, hungry or just tired. Perhaps they didn’t have any money, and had a long bus ride home. I am not saying these circumstances justify his negative behavior, but it helps me have a deeper understanding of the overall picture of what it might be like to be him.

From this event, I learned that Jesus’ beatitude isn’t an excuse for me to be self-righteous. It’s an invitation to love and communicate more consciously and bear the suffering I see without necessarily needing to change or fix it. Some wise one put it this way: “the suffering is in the wanting.” I suffered because I wanted him to be different. I wanted the night to be different. I wanted him *not* to be yelling. I wanted it to be cooler out. I wanted his wife to feel loved not attacked. I wanted his children

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to see a different way of being modeled by their father. I wanted them to have a car and not to have to wait for a bus. All of this wanting ran straight into a wall of reality, and the end result was an angry man kicking my new car as I drove away. I now understand that in part, because of my poor word choice; the persecutor became the persecuted.

#### GETTING PERSECUTED DOESN'T EXEMPT ME FROM SEEING HOW I CONTRIBUTE

One of the Work ideas that has deeply blessed me as I have learned it through Maurice Nicoll's *Commentaries* and the Thursday night classes at The Church of Conscious Harmony is that my "Being draws my life." Another way of saying that profound truth, is the common wisdom phrase, "I reap what I sow." In life, it is so easy to blame another person for my suffering or sense of being offended. I wish to be cautious in how I apply this principle, but I find the practice to be very profound and important. Yes, I was a victim of his violent anger, but I also participated in unintentionally triggering his anger toward me. At first, it was hard to see how I contributed to the experience and even more humbling to acknowledge.

My co-creation of the event is

rooted in the truth that everything occurring is interrelated with everything else. We are interrelated in a field of quantum entanglement. I am a participant in the reality(s) I am experiencing – the ones I label easy and good, and the ones I label difficult and bad. If I wish to no longer be persecuted in a relationship or in a situation, perhaps I can discover to what degree I am entangled, and how I might partake in the untangling process.

#### PERSECUTION CAN BECOME A TRANSFORMATIONAL TEACHER

I understand that there are people all over the world at this moment literally and physically being persecuted just because they are who they are: a child, a woman, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, a refugee, a certain nationality. It's not my intention to diminish their or anyone's suffering. And yet, from within every experience that resists us – that comes against us as a kind of persecution – there is also a hidden gift for our growth.

In my moments of suffering, persecution or feeling resisted, the hidden gift of growth is I have learned something about myself. In the event with the angry young man, I learned that I bring a lot of "story" to situations that involve

an angry young father yelling at a passive young woman. Why? You guessed it, because I remember being that little boy standing next to his passive mother with an angry, out-of-control drunk father.

All that persecutes also announces my own edge of discovery. Here. Right there. This is where I can surrender to the exchange of energies for my growth, in both knowledge and being. Perhaps this points to the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection dynamic applied to everyone's life journey. And, my response to this mystery requires more time in the silence. Or, perhaps I should say, more silence in me.

#### NEXT TIME, PETER, REMEMBER THIS...

Rarely does anyone begin the day wanting to persecute someone. I suspect it is even rarer to begin the day wanting to be persecuted. More likely, what triggers "persecution" in human relationships is that we simply forget love because we have stepped into the shadow of fear. Wisdom teaches us that fear is the opposite of love and also that fear suffocates our blessings. It seems self-evident that we cannot experience the "Blessed Life" when we are under the spell of fear – biochemically, emotionally, or physiologically. So why is it so

difficult to step out of the shadow of fear into the light of love?

To help counteract the fear, I often turn to Nan Merrill's rendering of the Book of Psalms. I am particularly blessed by Psalm 7, which I hear as a perfect expression of my essence wish for a different kind of future and a different kind of relationship to fear. It is also a brief "prayer sentence" remedy for anyone facing persecution, or discovering in their own self the negative emotions that tend to lead to persecuting others – in word, thought or deed:

*O let the terrible fears that keep me from loving come to an end! Establish integrity within me. You who readily forgive us. You who call us back Home to love...If I close my heart to Love, the Beloved awaits close by...Take notice! Even should I wander far from Love's path, though I err and walk on roads of illusion and darkness, should I act out of fear and ignorance, falling into a pit of despair. Yet will love remain constant and sure...I shall sing praises to the Beloved, knowing my Oneness with All.*

So, next time, when I encounter another situation that I think needs to be different or changed, I wish

to act more consciously. More empathetically. More centered – in thought, emotion and body. Perhaps then I might not further contribute to the suffering and persecution of humankind, but might instead convey the Third-Force grace that neutralizes opposites, easing the collision of forces beyond my control.

If I had taken a breath, gotten centered, and prayed for help in how to respond, perhaps there might have been more room for the Spirit to flow through me and guide me to the most wise response possible in that moment. I suspect that this approach might apply to many situations and relationships where we feel the friction of personalities or heated emotions seemingly coming against us or even within us.

Perhaps the blessing that we receive in such moments or seasons of "persecutions" is in the strengthening of our will. If, as the Work teaches, patience is the mother of will, perhaps then suffering is the father of will – strengthening us in an interior way to consciously choose and enter into the very matrix that might first undo us so as to transform us. There is a word for this matrix: the cross. ...*for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* ☉

## CCH BOOKSTORE

### SUGGESTED TITLES FOR AUGUST



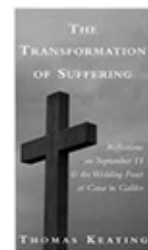
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*A VISION OF HOPE FOR OUR TIME*  
BY DESMOND TUTU



*PRISON WRITINGS*  
BY ALFRED DELP



*THE TRANSFORMATION OF SUFFERING*  
BY THOMAS KEATING

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# SACRED MOVEMENTS:

## PARTICIPATE, WORK, GROW, TRANSFORM

The Gurdjieff Movements are a collection of over 60 sacred dances, exercises, and moving prayers with their accompanying music. These sacred movements were collected from various schools, dervish orders and monasteries across the Middle East and Central Asia and brought to the West by the philosopher and mystic, G.I. Gurdjieff.


Through the practice of directed attention, the Movements convey knowledge about the two main cosmic laws as taught by Gurdjieff, the Law of Three and the Law of Seven. This manifests in communicating universal truths and experiencing the working of finer energies—bringing all parts of the human organism into a more harmonious whole. The practice of Movements is a powerful, experiential method that integrates the mind, body and emotions through music and precise physical postures in a group setting. It can provide a means of balancing the intellectual, moving and emotional centers and learning how to allow each center to do its proper work without interfering with the right use of the other two centers.

The following experience, from a participant at The Church of Conscious Harmony regarding one of the Movements, demonstrates the power of entering into the three-centered experience through

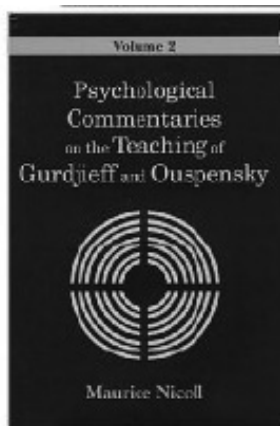
directed attention. As you'll see, when we truly surrender to the present moment, all aspects of our being can be touched and lifted; and we can then be open to receiving inputs from higher centers:

“L’Octave” (The Octave/Law of Three and Seven) – The right hand and arm move to the right as the minute hand on a clock, slowly forward, second-by-second. The music is soft, mysterious, hauntingly quiet but powerful. I sense others in the room whose arms are also moving exactly the same way, literally keeping the time, in tandem. We are clocks whose springs are running down to what or when? I know this, sense this, and feel this—all at the same time in my body, mind and heart. Even though I am intimately aware of all the others, the Holy Presence touches me closer-than-close. It is just God and me in this moment. I hear at the same moment, the tick-tick-tick of the electric clock in the fellowship hall. It seems unusually loud for some unknown reason. It ticks exactly in time to our movement. Time is passing on for all of us, ruthlessly, constantly. My heart beats

with the tick-tick-tick. I feel sad and amazed. Something keeps its rhythm going. I gaze ahead of me into the outside garden. There are maybe thousands of tiny white bugs floating up and down in a constant movement, out there. The bugs seem to be moving in sync with our arms in the room, and the clock—up and down, on and on—all one rhythm. I’m given to know I’m here in this second—only this second! I could stay here suspended in this moment held by Something who always holds me and always has. Then the Movement ends with the last chord of music. The suspended moment ends, too.”

It is with the deepest of intention that the Movements instructors and musicians will offer Gurdjieff Movements at CCH this fall. Your consent to participate can be of great benefit as you continue your study of the Work of Inner Christianity. Together, we continue the legacy of this sacred tradition once practiced by Maurice Nicoll under the instruction of Gurdjieff. 

For more information, please contact [jackstamps1@gmail.com](mailto:jackstamps1@gmail.com). To register, contact the office at 512-347-9673 or [officemgr@consciousharmony.org](mailto:officemgr@consciousharmony.org).



## THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY


*My Father is still working, and  
I also am working.* John 5:17

### RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A STATE OF BALANCE

In the esoteric Greek thinking, when one opposite encroached on another a state of *injustice* was said to exist. *Justice*, or *righteousness*, was regarded as a state of balance. ... The Greek word for righteousness ( $\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\eta$ ) has the original meaning of being *upright* and so, *between* the opposites. The “just” or “righteous” man, both of the New Testament and of the Socratic teaching four centuries earlier, and of the teaching of Pythagoras as early as the 6th century B.C., is the “upright” man, the man who stands balanced between the opposites and is *neither* of them. This is a very difficult idea to understand. But the idea of the just man was directly derived from the ancient teaching about the opposites. A one-sided man could not be a *just* man. A fanatic, a bigoted or scrupulous man, could not be just. Nor could a man who lived in some small part of himself be just. To be righteous, to be just, is *to be balanced*. Do not misuse this word *balanced*, imagining that perhaps because you do not

feel things so strongly as others, you are more balanced. To be balanced is not to be stupid but to be alive to every side of existence.

... But here we are speaking of justice or balance from the angle of the pendulum and the law of opposites and cannot bring in the [development of all the] centres, save to this extent: one centre may sometimes appear to act as the opposite of another and again in each centre there are different pendulums swinging at different rates. As was said before, when one opposite encroached on another, a state of injustice was said to exist. This is constantly happening in ourselves and in life around us now and in history. ...

The Work teaches that we are most unconscious, most asleep, when any pendulum in us is passing the mid-point. ... We forget that “Real I” is in the centre of the pendulum-swing. 

Maurice Nicoll, *Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky*, pages 326-328. For more information and experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the *Work of Inner Christianity* class held Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. at The Church of Conscious Harmony.



### THE CHURCH of CONSCIOUS HARMONY A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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## GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE, GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Fr. Thomas Keating, in his seminal work  
*Open Mind, Open Heart*,  
lists 42 principles underlying the Christian spiritual journey.  
Fr. Keating asks that these principles be read according  
to the method of Lectio Divina.  
One principle will appear in these pages each month.

### 25<sup>TH</sup> GUIDELINE



The spiritual radiation of a community  
depends on the commitment of its members  
to the inward journey and to each other.  
To offer one another space in which to grow as persons  
is an integral part of this commitment.

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## SEEDS

So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other men and  
love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are  
warmakers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which  
are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny,  
hate greed—but hate these things *in yourself*, not in another.

Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, page 122.

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### MULTI-DAY CENTERING PRAYER RETREATS AT CEDARBRAKE

Sep 9-14	6-day Welcoming	\$495/double*
Dec 2-8	7-day Advent	\$625/double*

\*Please contact the office to register and inquire about single room rates.

## AUGUST CALENDAR

Visit [consciousharmony.org](http://consciousharmony.org)  
for a complete listing of events

### SPECIAL EVENTS

2-Day Centering Prayer Retreat  
Aug 20 8:30 am-5:30 pm  
Aug 21 8 am-5:30 pm  
Cost \$100 Please register in the office.

Simple Explanations of Work Ideas  
Aug 25 - Sep 29 7:30-9 pm  
6 consecutive Thurs night classes

### MONTHLY

1st Sundays  
Bring non-perishables for Caritas

Community Workday  
Aug 6 9 am-noon

Gurdjieff Music  
Aug 16 7:30-8:30 pm

### WEEKLY

Sundays  
Lectio Divina 8-9 am  
Worship Service 10-11:30 am  
Youth Program 10-11:30 am  
Fellowship 11:30 am

Wednesdays  
Prayer Circle 10:15-10:45 am  
Contemplative Lunch noon-1 pm  
Contemplative Communion Service 6-7 pm

Thursdays 7:30-9 pm  
Work of Inner Christianity Class

Fridays 7:30-8:45 pm  
Devotional Service

### DAILY

Mondays-Fridays 7-7:35 am  
Centering Prayer Service in Theosis Chapel

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Recordings of services are available  
through the Bookstore and online at  
[www.consciousharmony.org](http://www.consciousharmony.org)



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*And when the disciples  
raised their eyes,  
they saw no one else  
but Jesus alone.*

Matthew 17:8

Such grace is a gift  
of Centering Prayer.

## THE GRACE OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

Notice that the disciples, after He touched them,  
“saw no one but Jesus.” This observation  
describes the fruit of the interior touch of the Spirit  
... which leads and moves us ...

to see Him in everything that happens.

Thus, as the disciples return to the plain,  
they take with them, not the experience of Jesus’ glory,  
which was so consoling, but something even more valuable:  
the transformation of consciousness that is the result  
of their experience on the mountain.

... They moved beyond fear and the domination  
of any emotion and are now able to live life  
on the plain in union with God.

They can live in the marketplace from their inmost center, their True Self.

The grace of the Transfiguration is not just a vision of glory,  
an isolated experience of divine consolation, however exalted.

... Its primary purpose is something greater:  
to empower us to live in the presence of God  
and to see the radiance of that presence in all events,  
people, the cosmos, and in the universe.

Thomas Keating, *Rearwakenings*

