The Center
for Christian Spirituality

Emptying Fullness:
The Beatitudes as Facets of the Divine

8:45 a.m. + July 5

At the center of our being is a point of nothingness which is untouched by sin and by illusion, a point of pure truth, a point or spark which belongs entirely to God, which is never at our disposal, from which God disposes of our lives, which is inaccessible to the fantasies of our own mind or the brutalities of our own will. This little point of nothingness and of absolute poverty is the pure glory of God in us. It is so to speak His name written in us, as our poverty, as our indigence, as our dependence, as our sonship. It is like a pure diamond, blazing with the invisible light of heaven. It is in everybody, and if we could see it we would see these billions of points of light coming together in the face and blaze of a sun that would make all the darkness and cruelty of life vanish completely….
I have no program for this seeing. It is only given.
But the gate of heaven is everywhere."
Thomas Merton, Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander

Crossing the Threshold

Connecting to Source ***"At The Center"***

Hidden deep within, undefiled by sin, is a refuge for the soul.
Filled with sacred light, shining pure and bright,
Where the heart can be made whole.
Universal grace floods this holy place, and can heal the deepest scar.
As the false self dies, underneath the lies,
Is the truth of who we are.

At the Center, at the Center, at the Center of my life is You.
At the Center, at the Center, at the Center of my life is You.

Praying the Psalm *contemplative adaptation of* ***Psalm 106***, Nan Merrill

Blessed are they who recognize the Gift,
and who follow the precepts of your Word at all times.
You remember us, O Beloved, as we journey through life;
help us to live the Mystery, that we may fulfill our divine destiny,
that we may co-create with You, that we may live into our divine birthright.
Stand by us that we may become poor in spirit,
acknowledging our own weaknesses that lead us astray.
Teach us to be patient with ourselves,
that we might offer the gift of patience to others;
O, that we might learn to be calm,
to persevere with utter trust as we face the fears that bind us.
We yearn for all that will bring us new life,
we long for your very Presence among us;
Comfort us, O Beloved, with the tranquility of your Spirit;
lead us into calm waters.

The Work of Faith — ***"The Heart of God"***

Faith that moves mountains,
Grace that forgives.
Peace that calms stormy seas.
Love that brings healing,
Trust that endures.
Truth that can set us free.
Help us embody all that you are,
And live lives that reflect your grace.
To walk with the stranger, until we are friends,
And we all find our place, at home in the heart of God.

Make us faithful to forgive,
when we're wounded by the world.
Peaceful bearers of your grace,
help us love as you love.

Contemplating the Way of Blessedness — ***Matthew 5:3-10 (NRSV)***

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Singing our Blessedness — ***"Always, All Ways"***

Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always.
Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always.

As I reach the end of myself,
I find fullness in you, fullness in you.
And though grief has broken my heart,
Divine light shines through, divine light shines through.
As I walk the world with gentle grace I see the strength of love.
As I seek to live in righteousness your presence is enough.

As my heart is open and still,
I see you in all things, you in all things.
As I lay my anger aside,
My heart softly sings, my heart softly sings.
And when love and truth require my all, my joy will not be lost.
For the hope of heaven fills my heart, a joy that's worth the cost.

Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always.
Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always

Facets of the Beatitude *contemplative translation of* ***Matthew 5:3****,* Sciretti

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the beggars for Spirit,
the Realm of the Heavens is theirs.
Blessed are those who know their own poverty before the Spirit,
who know they are and have nothing,
the Divine Sovereignty is already theirs.
Blessed are the hollow ones,
the Breath of Heaven is breathing through them.
O the blessedness of those who reach for the Mother-Spirit,
the empty-handed ones whose arms reach for Her,
She cannot resist filling them with Her Presence.

Meditation

Song of Response ***"Always, All Ways"***

Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always.
Always, all ways. Always, all ways.
You declare that I am blessed, always.

Silence as "Receiving" Prayer

During these minutes of silence, simply rest in God's indwelling and loving presence here with you now. Just be and receive. There is nothing you need to "do" but relax and go receptive, to be open to God's Presence already with and within you. To help you, center your attention in your heart and imagine your breath flowing in and out from your heart area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Paying attention to your breath is a way to pray this beatitude. If it helps you to center, use a heart-focused breath prayer such as: "Come Holy Breath" (inhale), "I am empty" (exhale), or "I am the reed" (inhale), "You are the Breath" (exhale).

Connecting to Source ***"At The Center"***

At the Center, at the Center, at the Center of my life is You.
At the Center, at the Center, at the Center of my life is You.

Holy Communion

Receiving a Good Word

Our Staff

Haley Brown *– Associate Director of The Anchor House*
Courtney Garrison *– Ministry Assistant*
Christian Ibanez *– AV Production*
Peter Johns *– Associate Director of Contemplative Worship*
Zachary Montasser – *Violinist*
Ruby Alberto *– AV Production*
Rev. Rachel Sciretti *– Associate Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. *– Pastor of The Center*
Anastasia Sciretti *– Cellist*

Today's Music

"At The Center" – Peter Johns, "***The Heart of God"***– Peter Johns,
"Always, All Ways" – Peter Johns

Centering Prayer
Immediately following worship | The Chapel

The Anchor House Summer Hours
Tuesdays & Wednesdays | Noon - 4pm

The Anchor House is open in the afternoons for you to come and pray, meditate, walk the Labyrinth or just be still. If you would like to request a specific room for spiritual direction, counseling or for your own time of retreat outside of these hours, please let Haley know and we will make sure a room is available for you.

Holding One Another in the Light

As our commitment to one another deepens, we want to be able to pray for one another – bearing burdens and joining in celebrations. Here is how to participate:

1. *Make a request for prayer or thanksgiving using the QR link or go to thecenterfcs.org*
2. *Opt in to receive the weekly prayer list by emailing Rachel at rsciretti@chapelwood.org.*

Giving to The Center

We invite you to financially give to The Center in response to what you have received today or throughout our contemplative offerings. Using the QR code will take you to a page where you can make a one-time offering or recurring gift. Thank you for your contribution and investment.

Spiritual Direction

Most of us at some point in life know we want a deeper relationship with God, and direction for our life, but just have no idea where to start. It leaves us feeling isolated and alone. At The Center for Christian Spirituality, we believe spirituality is meant to be lived in community, and everyone deserves a Soul Friend! That is why we have launched our Spiritual Direction ministry here at The Center. Our trained and certified Spiritual Directors help you be watchful and attentive to God in your life and guide you through the ups and downs of life and faith. If you are looking for a little one-on-one guidance in your relationship with God and God's direction for your life, one of our Spiritual Directors might just be a great fit for you.