



The CENTER
for Christian Spirituality

Sensing God

8:45 a.m. + April 02, 2023 + Palm Sunday

We are about to embark on Holy Week, the most sacred and mystical passage in the Christian year, when we ritually re-live and re-claim the very epicenter of Christianity, as Jesus reveals the depth of love and wagers his very life for the reality of the premise he has staked his whole ministry on: that love is stronger than death — love is the strongest power in the world — stronger than fear — stronger than hatred — stronger than division — stronger than violence. This is the moment, this week, when we again have the opportunity in a very special way to enter into this mystery of love with him, confront our own fears and shadows, and emerge as shareholders in his resurrection — not only through faith but through our own lived experience.... The epicenter of Christianity is Love, and this week we enter the epicenter.

May we do so in Love.

Cynthia Bourgeault

Crossing the Threshold

Grounding Ourselves

*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.*

"Heaven Touches Earth"

Scripture

*Then I heard the voice of the LORD saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I; send me!" And he said, "Go and say to this people:*

*'Keep listening, but do not understand;
keep looking, but do not perceive.'
Make the heart of this people dull,
and stop their ears,
and shut their eyes,
so that they may not look with their eyes
and listen with their ears
and understand with their hearts
and turn and be healed."*

Isaiah 6:8-10

Meditation

Song

"A Discerning Heart"

*I do not ask for wealth or fame.
Endless riches, great acclaim.
I ask for one thing in your name:
Grant me a discerning heart.*

*Beyond the knowledge I have learned.
All experiences earned.
See wisdom waits to be affirmed,
Held in a discerning heart.*

*Wisdom calls, wisdom leads.
Her ways are pleasant, her paths are peace.
She is the fruit of the tree of life.
Grown in a discerning heart.*

*So let my life be fertile soil.
Spirit plant and I will toil,
To tend a crop that will not spoil,
Stored in a discerning heart.*

Wisdom calls, wisdom leads...

The Morning Gospel

John 12:24-25

*The Living Christ says,
"Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and 'dies,'
it remains alone and just a seed.
But if it 'dies,' it bears much fruit.
In the same way, the one who is devoted and attached to his or her own soul
will inevitably lose it.
But the one who detaches from his or her soul that is attached to this world
will keep the soul unto Life Eternal."*

Meditation

Song of Response

"No One Takes This Life From Me"

*No one takes this life from me,
I give it freely.
Abba makes this life to be,
I give it freely.*

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 phrase "With an open heart, I wait."

Communion

Communion Song

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

"Agnus Dei"

Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world, grant us peace

Receiving a Good Word



Holy Week at the Center

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.

Guided Silent Retreat

Monday April 3 @ 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. | The Villa de Matel, 6510 Lawndale St.

For April's guided silent retreat, we will open ourselves to the Way of the Teacher and to the gifts of wisdom, curiosity, and detachment.. There will be plenty of time for reading and reflection, prayerful walking (including a labyrinth), and space for prayerful art. Participants will receive handouts with many readings for lectio divina as well as reflective questions. 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.



Holy Wednesday Service

Wednesday April 5 @ 12:00 p.m. | The Anchor House

Enter into the Holy Wednesday narrative of Mary Magdalene anointing Jesus. After a brief time of welcome, we will enter into a Contemplative Remembrance of this act that Jesus said, "truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." (Mark 14:9) There will be chant, readings, silence, and a time for anointing.

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday April 6 @ 6:00 p.m. | The Chapel

In this Contemplative Gathering, we will enter into the Maundy Thursday narrative of Jesus at his Last Supper as recorded in John 13 and Mark 14. After a brief time of welcome, we will contemplatively reflect on what Jesus was teaching them (and us) by example through washing their "feet" and what that can mean for us today as we seek to consciously love. We will then enter into a Contemplative Remembrance of the Last Supper, this act that Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19) There will be chant, readings, silence, and a time for taking Holy Communion.

Good Friday Service

Friday April 7 @ 12:00 p.m. | The Chapel

During these thirty minutes or so at the time of day that we remember when Jesus surrendered his all to God and “breathed his last” (Luke 23:46), we will have a time of contemplative chant, including chanting the words Yeshua said in Aramaic when he died, Lectio Divina on this passage as it is found in Luke 23, and 20 minutes of silence as Centering Prayer. We will come out with chant again as we depart to live the inner dimension of Jesus’s soul gesture of surrender into the rest of our days.

The Center’s Next Pilgrimage

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

October 16 – 27, 2023 | \$4690 per person

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 the medieval Christianity. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. and Peter Johns will be the spiritual guides for this pilgrimage. Cost of the trip includes round trip air transportation from Houston to London and from Edinburgh back to Houston; all hotels (double occupancy or \$800 more for single room); two meals a day; all entrance fees, airport taxes, fuel surcharges and tips. This pilgrimage is limited to 18 people. To reserve a spot please see Michael or Peter for a Registration Form, the deposit is \$300.

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.*