

Will you pray with me and for me that everything the *One Voice that Calls Us* wants to express in us, through us, and as us, will arise in this time of shared meditation and message this morning.

Meditation

As we enter our time of meditation, centered in peace, let any places where your body may be holding tension to soften and settle in. Feel yourself supported, noticing how the back of your body touches where you sit. Sense your feet resting on the floor beneath, and let your hands rest comfortably by your side or on your lap. You may want to close your eyes, or simply let your gaze soften and drop, or focus on the light of the candle. Notice the sensation of your breath in, and out.


As we enter the quiet, I invite you to bring to mind a place in nature that feels sacred to you. It may be sitting under a tree in your own backyard, a place in memory or an imagined place.

I breathe in, and I am rooted.
I breathe out, and lift my face to the sun
Breath in, my roots grow deep
Breath out, my being expands
Rooted
Expansive

Rhythm of breath ebbs and flows, like waves on the shore
Breath flows in, breath flows out
Peace flows in, peace flows out

Peace
Peace

Message:

- St. Patrick is said to have used the three leafed shamrock to teach the Irish about the Great Mystery of the Trinity, and the shamrock has become the ubiquitous symbol of a day in the U.S. that seems to have very little to do with spirituality!

- It also gives me the structure that holds my musings this morning, with inspiration about the VOICE, the CALL, and the HOME in the Voice that Calls Us Home

The Voice

Whose VOICE do *you* hear, and how do you hear it?

- Noisy Voices of those wielding *power over*, voices of competing products shouting “buy me! I’ll make you happy!” Voices in our own heads telling us we need to be productive, perfect in order to be loved, in order to be successful
- How do you hear the voices of those parts of yourself that have been exiled to the far reaches of our sense of our wholeness?
- How does the voice of GOD, Spirit, the Beloved get through to you? Is it in a whisper of wind, the eyes of a beloved pet, the gift of singing together here? The quiet nudge of your heart overflowing in tears or laughter?
- Do you hear the ONE Voice through your guides and the inspiration of saints– St Patrick/ St Brigid of Ireland– bodhisattvas and holy ones who walk among us today? Do you SPEAK the Voice to all those you encounter?

In Celtic spirituality, all of creation IS the Voice of GOD...

From ***Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul***, by John Philip Newell:

From John’s gospel: *‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and Word was God.’*(1:1) ...everything has come into being through the Word. Everything is essentially an utterance of the divine, a sacred sounding, each creature and life-form a unique and unrepeatable expression of the One.”

“In Celtic wisdom, we remember the earth as sacred. Every tree, bush, every flower and creature, every hill and mountain is on fire with the divine. The life within all life is holy. **What we do to the body of the earth is what we do to God.**”

And as Jesus, the Wayshower taught in the gospel of Matthew, “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. What you do to the least of these children of God, you do to me.” This is how we are all called to live...

The Call

How do we hear the Voice that Calls?

In ***Earth, Our Original Monastery***, Christine Valters Paintner invites us to meet God, to experience the goodness of the Divine in nature, and to find REVELATION in the wonder of Creation. In chapter 3, “Earth as the Original Saints” she quotes Thomas Merton from his *New Seeds of Contemplation*:

“The pale flowers of the Dogwood outside this window are saints... the bass and trout hiding in the deep pools of the river are canonized by their beauty and their strength. the legs hidden among the hills are saints, and the sea too is a saint who praises God without interruption in her majestic dance...For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am and of discovering my true self. Trees and animals have no problem. God makes them what they are without consulting them, and they are perfectly satisfied. With us it is different. God leaves us free to be whatever we like.

We can be ourselves or not, as we please. We are at liberty to be real, or to be unreal. We may be true or false, the choice is ours.”

The choice is ours– to *hear the call* to be real, to be true, to be of loving sacred service, to disrupt the systems of oppression– in our culture and in the world, but in our own hearts and lives as well.

We hear the same call: “AWAKEN! ARISE! REST in the Heart of the Mother. Rest in the arms of the Father. BE PEACE, Come HOME to your True Self.” It is the *same* call, and yet *our answer* to the ONE call to the “sainthood” is to live fully in the unrepeatable expression of our full divinity and full humanity– just as the beauty to be found in the saints and scriptures of Nature are unrepeatable expression of the divine...

Home

Where is the HOME we are called to?

On April 2, 2021, I closed on my first home. A few weeks later, I laughed out loud at Divine Timing while reading my *Free Will Horoscope* by Rob Breszny. Here's an excerpt of what I copied so I could save it to remember:

YOUR TRUE HOME

I invite you to dream and muse about your true home; your sweet, energizing, love-strong home, the haven where you can freely be high and deep, robust and tender, flexible and rigorous; the oasis where you are the person you promised yourself you could be.

To stimulate and enhance your thoughtful feelings about your true home, experiment with the following activities.

- Feed your roots.
- Cherish and foster your reliable sources of energy and inspiration.
- Identify all the influences that nurture you, and treasure your relationship with them.
- Tend to your web of close allies.
- Take care of what takes care of you.
- Cultivate the arts of adoration and reverence and awe.

It's an incredible privilege and blessing to have a physical home that helps me feed my roots and treasure all that nurtures me as I tend my web of close allies. In my home, I have freedom to rest, to pray, to read, to listen to music all in service of the True Home of my innermost being.

I also have the privilege of bearing witness to stories of lives right here in our city without that freedom: the guests at the FOCUS breakfast program, those unhoused and underhoused, those who live in the margins in an economy that has for decades fed the wealth of a few over the basic needs of the many.

I have the privilege of reading stories of families who left homes out of desperation seeking safety and the promise of a new start— families like my Irish peasant ancestors, families like those living and growing lives in the border towns of the Rio Grande, families settling here in Albany coming from areas ravaged by war.

I have the privilege of knowing MY ancestors, though poor and frightened when they arrived on these shores, came freely, with hope– not bound in chains and sold as chattel.

WE have the privilege of a spiritual home where we gather to feed our roots, where we can grow traditions, and cherish the gifts we each bring to this Unity family. We have a physical home here where we cultivate the courage to show up, where we pause together in song, in silence, in friendship—to listen to the One Voice that Calls each of US.

So today, I leave us with a wee bit of wisdom from Irish mystic poet, John O'Donohue, and a request: First,

To Come Home To Yourself

*May all that is unforgiven in you
be released.*

*May your fears yield
their deepest tranquilities.*

*May all that is unlived in you
blossom into a future
graced with love.*

And now my request.

This week, will you join me in paying attention? Spend time in the sacredness of the Earth. Notice where you hear the voice of God, and where you SPEAK the voice of God. Disrupt your own tendencies of “power over” or “power through” and find rest in the arms of God. Come home to yourself, the deep, beating heart of God within you. And share that with the least of our beloved siblings in God, and with all you encounter.

May it be so. And so it is. Amen.