



TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 10, 2021

Thoughts of Preparation

Contemplation invites us to enter into the moment with a heart alive to whatever might happen. It is not just thinking about or analyzing an event or person. Contemplation asks us to see with faith, hope and love. It asks us to seek God and the "meanings" threaded through our days and years, so that our experience of being embedded in the triune life of God deepens and grows.

-- Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*

Contemplation is an exercise in openness, in keeping all three spaces open: heart, mind, and body. Contemplation is the highest expression of intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive. —*Thomas Merton*

Contemplative prayer is a practice for a lifetime, never perfected yet always enough. -- *CAC.org*

Contemplation happens to everyone. It happens in moments when we are open, undefended, and immediately present. —*Gerald May*

Welcome

Prelude

Tower Bell

*Call to Worship

(the congregational *responses* are from St. Teresa of Avila)

Let us pray. O God, the world seems to be in chaos. Climate change, endless warfare, political divisions, mass shootings, unchecked poverty, ongoing racism, natural disasters, pandemics— anxiety mounts, despair is on the rise, hope is hard to come by.

Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you.

We search for meaning, awash in seas of commercialism, greed, competition, egotism.

All things are passing;

We invest in stuff. We seek purpose in the temporary and the trivial.

God only is changeless.

We want what we want, and we want it now. Our lives are often a blur.

Patience gains all things.

Though we claim not to, and know better, we still worship idols, then wonder why we feel adrift.

Who has God wants nothing.

We sleepwalk through our lives—and in rare but precious moments, we want MORE;

God alone suffices.

So let us pray. Let us worship. Changeless One, we open to YOU:

It is of great importance, when we begin to practice prayer, not to let ourselves be frightened by our own thoughts.

***Prayer of Adoration**

(Julian of Norwich)

In You, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss. In You, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving. You are our mother, brother, and savior. In You, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvelous and plenteous grace. You are our clothing; for love You wrap us and embrace us. You are our maker, our lover, our keeper. Teach us to believe that by Your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

(Greatest)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

Scripture Lesson--From the Hebrew Wisdom Literature: Ecclesiastes 9.11-12a, 13-18 (The Message)

I took another walk around the neighborhood and realized that on this earth as it is—

The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,
Nor satisfaction to the wise, nor riches to the smart,
Nor grace to the learned. Sooner or later bad luck hits us all.

No one can predict misfortune. Like fish caught in a cruel net or birds in a trap, so men and women are caught by accidents evil and sudden.

One day as I was observing how wisdom fares on this earth, I saw something that made me sit up and take notice. There was a small town with only a few people in it. A strong king came and mounted an attack, building trenches and attack posts around it. There was a poor but wise man in that town whose wisdom saved the town, but he was promptly forgotten. (He was only a poor man, after all.) All the same, I still say that wisdom is better than muscle, even though the wise poor man was treated with contempt and soon forgotten.

The quiet words of the wise are more effective than the ranting of a king of fools.
Wisdom is better than warheads,
But one hothead can ruin the good earth.

Anthem

“Thou Art Holy” (Craig Courtney)

Holy, holy, holy, Thou art holy.
Thou alone art holy, Thou art holy.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty,
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity.

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim, falling down before Thee,
who wert, and art, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy, though the darkness hide Thee,
though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
perfect in power, in love and purity.

Thou art holy, Thou alone art holy.

Scripture Lesson

From The New Testament Letters:
Ephesians 13-19 (The Message)

It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This down payment from God is the first installment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.

That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the followers of Jesus, I couldn't stop thanking God for you—every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks. But I do more than thank. I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength!

Gathering Together in Prayer Silent Prayer -- Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Offertory Invitation

“The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller. The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped.” (Proverbs 11.24-25). Bring your offerings before the Lord!

Offertory

“For the Beauty of the Earth” (Craig Curry)

For the beauty of the earth, For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth Over and around us lies;
Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grateful praise.
Lord of all, to Thee we raise our hymn of praise.
For the wonder of each hour Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower, Sun and moon and stars of light;
For the joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above, For all gentle thoughts and mild,
For Thy Church that ever more Lifteth holy hands above.
Offering up on every shore Her pure sacrifice of love,
For Thyself, best gift divine, To our race so freely given;
For that great, great love of Thine, Peace on earth and joy in heaven.
Lord, accept our hymn of grateful praise!

Scripture Lesson--from the Gospels: Matthew 6.25-34 (The Message)

“If you decide for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don’t fuss about what’s on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, careless in the care of God. And you count far more to him than birds.

Has anyone by fussing in front of the mirror ever gotten taller by so much as an inch? All this time and money wasted on fashion—do you think it makes that much difference? Instead of looking at the fashions, walk out into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They never primp or shop, but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them.

If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers—most of which are never even seen—don’t you think he’ll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your

life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes."

Sermon BECOMING WHO YOU ARE -- The Spiritual Disciplines,
Part Four: **CONTEMPLATION** (And the Contemplative Mind)
Rev. Barry Bordenkircher

***Hymn #345** *"Jesus Calls Us o'er the Tumult"* (Galilee)
(see last page)

***Responsive Benediction** (St. John of the Cross)
O blessed Jesus, give me stillness of soul in you. Let your mighty calmness reign in me. Rule me, O King of Gentleness, King of Peace.
By your own deep patience give me patience, stillness of soul in you. Make me in this, and in all, more and more like you! Amen.

Postlude *"All Hail the Power"* (Hal Hopson)

"Participants" in Today's Service

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) Teresa's life and works were so vast and varied they cannot be easily summarized. A Carmelite nun, then Abbess and administrator, she spent huge amounts of time traveling the Spanish countryside establishing reformed (that is, more simple) Carmelite convents. She convinced John of the Cross (himself a great mystic and author of The Dark Night of the Soul) to join her in this work. Her success as an administrator and reformer (she eventually founded 14 monasteries) was due in part to her natural leadership gifts, her tenacity in the face of adversity and a keen sense of humor. Yet it is her gift of spiritual direction, practiced personally with nuns and publicly in her writings, for which she is known today. She was hesitant to put her insights to paper but was ordered by her superiors to do so. Her greatest works, Autobiography, Way of Perfection, and The Interior Castle, contain some of the most profound insights into spiritual life ever written. In 1970 she became a Doctor of the Church.

St. Bede the Venerable (672-735) Bede was well known as an author, teacher and scholar, and his most famous work, Ecclesiastical History of the English People, gained him the title "The Father of English History". His ecumenical writings were extensive and included a number of Biblical commentaries and other theological works of exegetical erudition. He also helped popularize the practice of dating forward from the birth of Christ (Anno Domini – in the year of our Lord), a practice which eventually became commonplace in medieval Europe. Bede was one of the greatest teachers and writers of the Early Middle Ages and is considered by many historians to be the most important scholar of antiquity for the period between 600 and the coronation of Charlemagne in 800. In 1899, Pope Leo XIII declared him a Doctor of the Church. He is the only native of Great Britain to achieve this designation

Julian of Norwich, also called Juliana, (1342-1416), celebrated mystic whose Revelations of Divine Love (or Showings) is generally considered one of the most remarkable documents of medieval religious experience. She spent the latter part of her life as a recluse at St. Julian's Church, Norwich, England. Unparalleled in English religious literature, Revelations spans the most profound mysteries of the Christian faith—such as the problems of predestination, the foreknowledge of God, and the existence of evil. The clarity and depth of her perception, the precision and accuracy of her theological presentation, and the sincerity and beauty of her expression reveal a mind and personality of exceptional strength and charm. Never beatified, Julian is honored on the unofficial feast day of May 13.

St. John of the Cross (1542 – 1591), one of the greatest Christian mystics and Spanish poets, reformer of Spanish monasticism, and cofounder of the contemplative order of Discalced Carmelites. He is a patron saint of mystics and contemplatives and of Spanish poets. John of the Cross is known especially for his writings. He was mentored by Teresa of Ávila. Both his poetry and his studies on the development of the soul are considered the summit of mystical Spanish literature and among the greatest works of all Spanish literature. His most important work and one of the pinnacles of Christian mystical writing, is The Dark Night of the Soul—which he began while being imprisoned in Toledo and regularly tortured for his reform work among the older, stricter monastics. In 1926 he was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius XI, and is commonly known as the "Mystical Doctor".

Today's Worship Leaders:

Preaching Today: Rev. Barry Bordenkircher

Liturgist: Laura Haas

Organist: Michael Sullivan

Choral Director: Dobin Park

Thanks to all the musicians and to Michael Sullivan and Dobin Park for assisting with filming and to Dobin Park for film editing.

Music reprinted under OneLicense.net A-722754

345 Jesus Calls Us o'er the Tumult



1 Je - sus calls us o'er the tu - mult of our
 2 Je - sus calls us from the wor - ship of the
 3 In our joys and in our sor - rows, days of
 4 Je - sus calls us— by thy mer - cies, Sav - ior,



life's wild, rest - less sea; day by day his sweet voice
 vain world's gold - en store, from each i - dol that would
 toil and hours of ease, still he calls, in cares and
 may we hear thy call, give our hearts to thine o -



sound - eth, say - ing, "Chris - tian, fol - low me."
 keep us, say - ing, "Chris - tian, love me more."
 pleas - ures, "Chris - tian, love me more than these."
 be - dience, serve and love thee best of all.