



Contemplative Spiritual Formation Gathering

Online Meeting Program

Theme: "1st Hand Encounter"

Saturday, February 11, 2023

8 a.m. San Francisco/Vancouver; **9 a.m.** Denver, Calgary **10 a.m.** Chicago/Winnipeg/Mexico;
11 a.m. Toronto/New York City/Lima; **12:00** Halifax **1 p.m.** Sao Paulo/Santiago/Buenos Aires
4 p.m. London; **5 p.m.** Hamburg/Zurich; **6 p.m.** Cairo/Cape Town;
9:30 p.m. New Delhi; **00:01 Sunday** Manila/Singapore

Gaia Room, Meditation Chapel

[If you have registered with the Meditation Chapel, but can't find the email with the link that was sent to you, please send an email to dignitytoronto@gmail.com. For new Meditation Chapel users, register ahead of time [here](#).

<https://meditationchapel.org/gaia-chapel/>

Checking In:

As a ground rule for our gathering today - for the check-in and for the rest of our gathering today - only share what you are comfortable to do so. In addition, I ask everyone to remember that this is a spiritual space of confidentiality and trust.

God is present in all parts of our lives – not just the easy or serene moments. Acknowledge how you are feeling in this moment. This could be up or could be down. If being calm is hard, acknowledge it. If you find yourself frustrated or stressed, acknowledge it.

As our check-in, I invite you to share:

- your name,
- where you live,
- how you are feeling now, and
- what you are grateful for today.

Opening Spoken Prayer

Please turn to page 4.

+ Christian Meditation – Silent Prayer +

We'll now move from spoken prayer to 20 min. of silent prayer. It will be an opportunity to stop our repetitive thinking and become more aware of the present moment and the Divine indwelling in us.

I have some suggestions for what to do during the silence, as most persons are not accustomed to this state. Please note that this is not the only way.

First, when your eyes are closed, pay attention to your breathing. It's something we do from birth to death, normally without any awareness. To become grounded in the present, notice your breathing during the 20 min. of silence.

Second, select a sacred word or phrase, such as "Yahweh" the Hebrew word for God, saying "Yah" as you inhale and "Weh" as you exhale. Another mantra word is "Maranatha" meaning "Come Lord Jesus." Recite it as four syllables of equal length: "Ma-ra" as you inhale and "Na-tha" as you exhale. Whatever word you select, gently repeat it over and over during the silence. **Do not try to think or image anything – spiritual or otherwise.**

Third, during the silence, addictive thought patterns and obsessive ways of feeling will circle by, again and again, saying "Think me! Think me! Feel me! Feel me!" as they try harder to be noticed. In 90% of our thinking, our monkey brain rehashes the past and worries about the future. However, God is only to be found and experienced in the present. Use the imagery of some small boats lining the shoreline of a stream or river that is nearby. When one of these repetitive thoughts arises, gently name the thought or feeling, put it in one of the waiting boats and push it gently into the moving water, letting it flow downstream away from your present consciousness. If you choose, you can deal with it after our session today.

So, we'll start our 20 min. of silence. Please turn off your microphone and your video camera too. Sit still and upright. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Take two or three deep breaths. [pause] Feel yourself supported in whatever position you're in. Sink into that space where silence awaits you. Rest in the Divine who is resting in you. You are consenting to God's presence and action in your life. So, I invite you to be silent, still and aware. Listen and learn, being open to heart wisdom and grace.

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Reading and Sharing

The call to meditate is an invitation to stop leading our lives on the basis of second-hand evidence. It is a call to each one of us to come to grips with our spiritual capacity and so to discover for ourselves the astonishing richness of the human capacity that is anchored in the divine reality, in the divine life-power. And it is also an invitation to be simply open to that power, to be energised by it and to be swept along by it, into the depths of the divine reality itself.

The lived process is very important. We must always beware of being intoxicated merely by the message, merely by the good news, merely by the ideas of the gospel. *We must enter it in, taste and see.* And meditation is the process of entering in, of tasting, of seeing, *Saying your mantra every day, making the time available for meditation, morning and evening, and placing your spiritual journey and the spiritual reality at the centre of your life, that is what is important.*

That is what meditation is about – returning to your centre and finding that your centre is the gateway to the centre of All. And for that we have to stop living on the surface, we have to come to the depths.

John Main, The Heart of Creation

Possible Sharing Questions:

*What am I hearing? What phrase or idea **resonates** or challenges me? As an LGBTQ person?*

*How is it **touching** my life now?*

*How will I respond? Is there an **invitation** for me to be or to do in the next few days?*

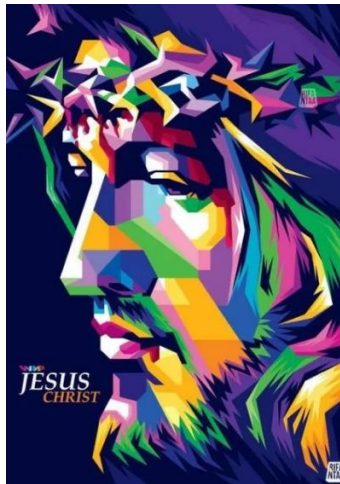
Get Ready My Soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiksgWpasKA>

LGBTI/ GNRC News

Any update, news, or a pressing issue in the community locally or globally that affects or concerns us as LGBTI and as Catholics. How am I / are we responding?

Spoken Prayers



[Opening Prayer] - Rainbow Christ Prayer

Rainbow Christ, you embody all the colors of the world. Rainbows serve as bridges between different realms: Heaven and Earth, east and west, queer and non-queer. Inspire us to remember the values expressed in the rainbow flag of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer [now called 2SLGBTQIA] community.

***Evolving Spirituality: Mysticism* [Closing Prayer]**

We celebrate
our common origin
with everything that exists.
We celebrate
the Divine Presence,
the Ground and Sustainer
of everything that exists,
in whom we live and move and have our being.

“Red is for life, the root of spirit. Living and Self-Loving Christ, you are our Root. Free us from shame, and grant us the grace of healthy pride so we can follow our own inner light. With the red stripe in the rainbow, we give thanks that God created us just the way we are.

Orange is for sexuality, the fire of spirit. Erotic Christ, you are our Fire, the Word made flesh. Free us from exploitation, and grant us the grace of mutual relationships. With the orange stripe in the rainbow, kindle a fire of passion in us.

Yellow is for self-esteem, the core of spirit. Out Christ, you are our Core. Free us from closets of secrecy, and give us the guts and grace to come out. With the yellow stripe in the rainbow, build our confidence.

Green is for love, the heart of spirit. Transgressive Outlaw Christ, you are our Heart, breaking rules out of love. In a world obsessed with purity, you touch the sick and eat with outcasts. Free us from conformity, and grant us the grace of deviance. With the green stripe in the rainbow, fill our hearts with untamed compassion for all beings.

Blue is for self-expression, the voice of spirit. Liberator Christ, you are our Voice, speaking out against all forms of oppression. Free us from apathy, and grant us the grace of activism. With the blue stripe in the rainbow, motivate us to call for justice.

Violet is for vision, the wisdom of spirit. Interconnected Christ, you are our Wisdom, creating and sustaining the universe. Free us from isolation, and grant us the grace of interdependence. With the violet stripe in the rainbow, connect us with others and with the whole creation.”

Rainbow colors come together to make one light, the crown of universal consciousness. Hybrid and All-Encompassing Christ, you are our Crown, both human and divine. Free us from rigid categories, and grant us the grace of interwoven identities. With the rainbow, lead us beyond black-and-white thinking to experience the whole spectrum of life.

Rainbow Christ, you light up the world. You make rainbows as a promise to support all life

We acknowledge
this awesome mystery
embodied
in every human person,
aware that
each gives the Divine Presence
unique and personal expression.

Here,
now,
the Divine Energizing Presence is everywhere present,
visible in every human person
who loves.

Here,
now,
this Presence comes to visible expression
in each of us.
We give thanks for all gender identities
throughout human history
who sought to articulate
human connectedness with the Divine
and with all of creation.

We give thanks especially for Jesus of Nazareth.
He inspires us to name ourselves
as “temples” of the Divine Spirit
and challenges us to live and act accordingly.

Jesus challenges us
to look into our hearts,
to examine the way we are neighbor,
to overcome our prejudices,
to put an end to divisions,
to stretch our generosity,
to overcome our fear of the mystery,
to see the Divine present in our everyday loving,
to make the “reign” of love visible
throughout our world.

We believe
the same Spirit of Divinity
that came to visibility in Jesus
yearns for visible expression in us.

This is our common dignity
whatever our race or creed,
whatever our place or time.

We long to see our common dignity
proclaimed
honored
and celebrated by all religions.

We pray that the one Spirit all people share

on Earth. In the rainbow space we can see all the hidden connections between sexualities, genders, and races. Like the rainbow, may we embody all the colors of the world! Amen.

[written by Kittridge Cherry and Patrick Cheng. Rainbow Theology, 2013, 155-156.]

may be given free and generous expression for the betterment of humanity and our world. Amen.

[Adapted from: Morwood, Michael. *Praying a New Story*. Orbis Books.]

For further information on the GNRC Contemplative Spiritual Formation Committee, see <https://rainbowcatholics.org/contemplative-spiritual-formation-gathering/>