

Session One

Wednesday 8 June

John 3:8

The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

Reflection on Titian's Noli me Tangere. Our Sound is Our Wound by Lucy Winkett

Resurrection itself seems to be silent: a delicate, unheard moment of grace that, when we finally notice it, we realise has been there all the time. The first sound of resurrection we hear is a woman's name: 'Mary.' This tender conversation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene is the dominant visual image of resurrection repeated by artists over the centuries. After a faltering conversation full of mistakes and misunderstandings, she is told to go and teach her brothers the greatest truth about God.

Issac Pennington, Quaker

'There is a great difference between comprehending the knowledge of things and tasting the hidden life of them'

Prayer

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
and Thee, of Both, to be but one;
that through the ages all along
this may be our endless song:
Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Veni Creator Spiritus. Attrib. Rabanus Maurus, trans. John Cosin

Session Two

Wednesday 12 June

Mark 3: 31-35

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your

mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you". And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and my sister and my mother."

Reflection - of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

"Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire."

Prayer

We are Your Presence
to each other Dear God
in our love and care for each other
having time for each other
time to listen
to be a presence of Spirit.

'Being a Presence of Spirit' - Noel Davis (from: 'The Joy of Living our Heart's Knowing and Imagining')

Session 3

Wednesday July 10th

Mark 6: 1-13

The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth:

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Mother Teresa's 'Anyway Poem' - inscribed on the wall of Mother Teresa's children's home in Calcutta.

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God;
It was never between you and them anyway.

Prayer

Living, All Vulnerable God
we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.

from: The Anglican Church of Australia - A Prayer Book for Australia - adapted

Session four

Wednesday August 14

Luke 12 27

Look how the wild flowers grow. They don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers

Reading from Rumi

Our anxiety comes from our search for tranquillity accept chaos and peace will surely follow

Prayer

Dear God

Help us to trust in your words of encouragement and to remember with Thomas Merton

'The joy of the cosmic dance which is always there and that we are invited to forget ourselves on purpose
and join in the general dance

Session 5

Wednesday September 11

Psalm 84 v 1-7

How lovely is your dwelling place,
LORD Almighty!

²My soul yearns, even faints,
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh cry out
for the living God.

³Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—
a place near your altar,
LORD Almighty, my King and my God.

⁴Blessed are those who dwell in your house;
they are ever praising you.^[c]⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you,

whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.

⁶As they pass through the Valley of Baka,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.^[d]

⁷They go from strength to strength,
till each appears before God in Zion.

Freya Mathews 'Journey to the source of the Merri'

In this excerpt, Freya meditates on the difference between pilgrimage and exploration in relation to land.

...the relationship to land that was established by these journeys (*of early Australian colonists*) was of course one of conquest rather than mutual belonging. The explorers were not pilgrims. Their journeys did indeed gather the people and places, the species and landforms they encountered, into stories, but the reference point of these stories - the centre around which they turned - was not a sacred destination but the personality of the explorer, the 'hero', himself. If pilgrimage draws everything the pilgrim encounters, including himself, into the net of meaning provided by the destination, the colonising journey draws everything the explorer encounters to himself - he arrogates the landscape to himself by the force of his heroic will.

Instead of walking the world into being, then, bringing it all to life in the wrap of meaning that emanates from a sacred destination, the explorer walks himself into being. He enchants and charges up his own personality (and by implication, that of his race and class and culture) by *overcoming* the people and places he encounters, mythically absorbing their life force into himself, rendering them objects of his own triumphalism.

... To belong to the land is to uncover its layers, discover its story and weave one's own identity into that story.

Prayer

Journeying God,
Pitch your tent with mine so that I may not be deterred
by hardship, strangeness, doubt.
Show me the movement I must make
toward a wealth not dependent on possessions,
toward a wisdom not based on books,
toward a strength not bolstered by might,
toward a god not confined to heaven.
Help me to find myself as I walk in others' shoes

**Song from Ghana as found in 'The Soul of a Pilgrim' by Christine Valters
Painter.**

Session 6

Wednesday October 9

Mark 4: 26-29

²⁶ He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Meister Eckhart 'You are a Construction Zone' from Meister Eckhart's book of Darkness and Light (Meditations on The Wayless Way) by Jon M Sweney and Mark S Burrows

Yes, you, here and now in this one
wild and precious life of yours,
you are always becoming new,
for God is in all that is, always
making all things new - even you.

To experience this, stop thinking
about outward things in your life,
which worry or confuse you,
and turn to that innermost part of
your soul, with all its radiance,
for it is there that God is ever
creating within you.

Only when you believe this
will you find it, and only when
you find this will you believe.

Prayer

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.
May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where
there is great love, warmth, feeling, and forgiveness.
May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant, or cold in you.
May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship, and affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.
May you be good to them
and may you be there for them;
may they bring you all the blessings, challenges, truth, and light
that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated.
May you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with your *anam cara*.

A Friendship Blessing by John O'Donohue from 'To Bless the Space Between Us'.

Session 7

Wednesday November 13

The Beatitudes

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Haunted from *Consolations, The Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words* by David Whyte

Haunted is a word that denotes an unresolved parallel, a presence that is not quite a presence; a visitation by the as yet unspeakable. It is also emblematic of the longing for incarnation, of an unbearable substrate of wanting, of not finding a home in this world or in the next, someone or something that walks in the halls of our house or our mind looking for what will help to lay its own self to rest.

We cease to be haunted when we cease to be afraid of making what has been untouchable real and touchable again: especially our understandings of the past, and especially those we wronged, those we were wronged by, or those we did not help. We become real by forgiving ourselves, and we forgive ourselves most authentically by changing the foundational pattern of our behaviour, especially our behaviour to those we have hurt.

We banish the misaligned when we align with what we are called to: we become visible and real when we give our own gift and stop waiting for the gift to be given to us. We wake into our lives again, as if for the first time, laying to rest what previously had no home, through beginning to speak, beginning to make real and beginning to live, those elements constellating inside us that long to move from the invisible to the visible.

Prayer

The silent stars shine down on us with bright and sightless eye, unmindful of our little earth, of us who live and die. Are we but grains of stranded sand beside a cosmic sea that lie unvalued and unseen in such immensity?

O Christ, the bright and morning Star whose radiance does not fade, whose glory filled the universe before the planets played: come, heal our hearts of blinding doubt till faith shall end in sight. Shine down upon our sorrowing earth and make our darkness bright.

**HYMN [Tune: Kingsfold; Words: Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr (1923- 2007) alt.]
Verses 1, 4.**