



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Readings for 11/3/2012



A selection from Laurence Freeman OSB, "Spirit," **JESUS THE**

TEACHER WITHIN (New York: Continuum, 2000), pp. 186-87.

The joy of realizing the truth is the bliss of the Spirit. It erases the shame of all previous failures. Aware that this Spirit of truth is with us as a friend, we are better able to tolerate in others and in ourselves what has not yet reached fullness of being. . . Truth is tolerant because the Spirit is forgiving love.

It allows the untrue to survive for the time being as a loving parent allows a child to make mistakes. Truth embraces rather than excommunicates its enemies. It is made manifest after much distillation of experience. It is not an object or an answer to be stared at and preserved. [And] when there is no ego through which the truth has to pass, communication dilates into communion.

The Spirit is the egolessness, the boundless emptiness, of God. She therefore fills everything with her emptiness and contains "all the truth." Only emptiness can contain everything. Returning to us in the Spirit of truth, as friend and teacher, Jesus can therefore be both God and man, historical and cosmic, personal and universal. He is wave and particle, fully individuated, able to be his unique individual self and to be indivisible from everything. This makes his death, all death, meaningful and necessary.

In St John's gospel, the Resurrection and the sending of the Spirit are seen as a single event. On the evening of Easter Day Jesus came and stood among the disciples while they were huddled fearfully in a locked room. His first word to them was shalom. The rich Hebrew word for peace invoked the blessing of the harmony of all orders of being. Shalom flows directly from the Divine harmony which is the Spirit. To receive it is to share in that peace beyond all understanding. Jesus then breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

His breath, which carried his words into their minds and listening hearts, is a medium of the Spirit. Then he gave them the power to forgive sins. This power to forgive. . . is a charism of the Spirit because forgiveness removes the greatest of all obstacles to communication. It heals wounds, confesses the truth that sets us free, consoles pain, calms anger, dissolves resentment, achieves the reconciliation of enemies. Whoever knows the truth has the power

to forgive. . .We learn through her effect on ourselves what the Spirit is: a friend who has no favorites and who liberates the power to love, to forgive endlessly. She is beyond observation but we recognize her by the traces of her silent, guiding, healing, consoling passage through our lives.

After meditation: a selection from Bede Griffiths OSB, *THE NEW CREATION IN CHRIST: CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND COMMUNITY* (Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1994), p. 77.

The resurrection does not consist merely of the appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his death. Many think that these appearances in Galilee and Jerusalem are the resurrection. But they are simply to confirm the faith of the disciples. The real resurrection is the passing beyond the world altogether. It is Jesus' passage from this world to the Father. It was not an event in space and time, but the passage beyond space and time to the eternal, to reality. Jesus passed into reality. That is our starting point. It is into that world that we are invited to enter by meditation. We do not have to wait for physical death, but we can enter now into that eternal world. We have to go beyond the outer appearances of the senses and beyond the concepts of the mind, and open ourselves to the reality of Christ within, the Christ of the resurrection.

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