

Handout for week of 6/2/19 Jn. 17: 20-26 & Acts 7: 55-60

www.theark1.com

Connie May © 4/29/19

Fr. Robert Beck ([subscription](#))

Stone, Naomi. [Thou Preparest a Table before Us](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Priestly Prayer –Prayer for the World](#)

[New Melleray Abby Homilies](#)

[Mass on the World:](#) Teilhard de Chardin

ENTERING THE SCENE:

Richard Rohr teaches: Prayer is something that happens to you), much more than anything you privately do. It is an allowing of the Big Self more than an assertion of the small self. Eventually you will find yourself preferring to say, “Prayer happened, and I was there” more than “I prayed today.” All you know is that you are being led, being guided, being loved, being used, being prayed through—and you are no longer in the driver’s seat. God stops being an object of attention like any other object in the world, and becomes at some level your own “I am.” You start knowing through, with, and in Somebody Else. Your little “I Am” becomes “We Are.”

If you have even been with someone who is leaving you long before you are ready, you might get in touch the range of emotions that probably echo those in that room of the last supper.

Jn. 17: ²⁰ “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you,

Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. “Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Jesus is asking the Father to help us be with him and each other in ways that go beyond thinking to feeling. How do you think you would be feeling if you were there that night?

PRAYER: Gentle Jesus, I hear you praying for me and it plunges me into a place of union with you and all those around and in me. You help me get in touch with God’s love in ways that helps me to see how interconnected we all are with you and each other. I still am in the world, so by necessity my knowledge is incomplete. Help me as I open myself to being in and with you and all the others you have given me in my life. Amen

WORD STUDY AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

ASK: Some translations use the word pray.

Do the words pray and ask have different meanings/feelings for you?

THROUGH THEIR WORD: To share what you know with others who are open to listening is the source of all teaching.

What is your life teaching others about love?

BE ONE/COMPLETELY ONE: To be one is to have no distinction from another.

How is your ability to love making it possible to be one with others?

IN ME, IN THEM, IN YOU, IN US: To be in someone is to have them so intimately a part of you that the two cannot be separated.

Who are in you? Who are you in?

WORLD: The world in John’s gospel is that which is limited by space and time. Three times Jesus mentions the world. By repeating the world three times we know that Jesus teaching about it is complete.

How complete is your realization that this world is not all there is for you?

BELIEVE: By mentioning believing twice Jesus indicates that the faith in his words is not yet complete.

What is yet incomplete in your ability to believe Jesus’ teaching about God?

SENT ME: In this pre-resurrection prayer Jesus indicates that his mission was to bring to life his understanding of God. Once again he does this twice, and the final third time will come after his resurrection.

How do the post-resurrection experiences help the disciples complete their understanding of God? How do they help you also?

GIVEN: Jesus is very aware that all his life and mission is a gift of the Father.

Do you also have the awareness that your life is a gift and has a mission?

GLORY: Once again we have two mentions of glory which will be completed in the Resurrection.

How does the Resurrection reveal the glory of God for you?

KNOW/KNOWN: To know someone or something is to connect a previous experience.

What helps you know the ways that God is working in your life these days?

LOVED THEM, LOVED ME: Jesus' last testament is a prayer to the Father who is the source of all love.

In what ways do we know that the disciples eventually realized the deep love Jesus had for them? How do you also realize this deep love?

FATHER: Jesus' prayer to the father once again points us to the ultimate reality.

Ultimate reality goes beyond our ability to imagine. How do you deal with this limitation?



WITH ME WHERE I AM: To be with someone where they are, is to share the same space and values.

What helps you be with Jesus where he is? Who helps you be with Jesus where he is?

KNOWN YOU: Five times we hear this phrase. Five being the number of incompleteness also points us to the more that is yet to be known.

What is yet to be known for you so as to accept fully God's unconditional love?

NAME: To know someone's name is to know their essence. God knows your essence.

Does this delight or trouble you?

IN THEM: Three times Jesus talks about being in them, and through them, in us

as well.

Since Jesus was praying for each of us at that last supper, does this knowledge help you experience that he is in you?

PARALLEL TEXTS: Jn. 17: 21 // Jn. 10, 30: 10f. 20. Jn. 17:24 // Jn. 14: 3; 1 Thess. 4:17; Jn. 17: 25 // Jn. 1: 10;

OTHER TEXTS OF THE WEEK: Acts 7^o 55-60; [Ps 97:1-2, 6-7a, 9-12](#); Rev. 22: 12-14, 16-17, 20-21; Jn. 17: 20-26; Revised Common Lectionary: Acts 16: 16-34; [Ps. 97](#); Rev. 22: 12-14, 16-17, 20-21; Jn. 17: 20-26;

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION:

“Nothing ever happened in the past; it happened in the Now. Nothing will ever happen in the future; it will happen in the Now.”
Eckhart Tolle

Love is not merely the Christian duty; it is the Christian destiny. - N.T. Wright

Love seeks one thing only: the good of the one loved. It leaves all the other secondary effects to take care of themselves. Love, therefore, is its own reward. - Thomas Merton

Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? - John Wesley

Love has two lovely daughters, twins called grace and mercy. Like identical twins, they are often indistinguishable: Grace is the inner freedom to be merciful. Mercy is grace in action. And both are the children of love. Richard Rohr

If God is Trinity and Jesus is the face of God, then it is a benevolent universe. God is not someone to be afraid of, but is the Ground of Being and on our side. Richard Rohr

A Threefold God totally lets go of any boundaries for the sake of the Other, and then receives them back from Another. It is a nonstop waterwheel of Love. Each accepts that He is fully accepted by the Other, and then passes on that total acceptance. Thus indeed, “God is Love”! It’s the same spiritual journey for all of us, for it takes most of our life to accept that we are accepted—and to accept everyone else as a result. Richard Rohr

When we read Christ’s own prayer for unity, we realize that he understood even before he left his disciples that they would be tempted to split with one another over trivial things. He knew that unity is difficult to maintain, and so he did two things. First, he prayed for us, that we would remain one with one another, and second, he pointed out that the source of our unity is our union with him and his union with the Father: “May they all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, to that the world may believe that you have sent me.” Fitzpatrick, Mother Gail, OCSO. Seasons of Grace: Wisdom from the Cloister. Chicago. ACTA Pub. 2000. Pg. 200.

The Friend is the one who gives completely, gives one’s own life, shares everything, becomes food for others. Agape is a *spontic* energy, poured out as a libation, a gesture of reverence and worship, an endless stream of devotion. Those who identify themselves with this true selfhood, and thus experience participation in the divine life, all radiate agape energies toward one another. Instead of the empirical ego’s identity by mutual negation, we have identity by mutual affirmation. The Friend says to the beloved, “You and I are one; whoever sees me, sees you and whoever sees you sees me. Whatever any do to you, they do to me; and what that do to me, they do to you; what you do, I do; and what I do, you do. The Friend’s lives flow together. Like sunshine pouring into a room through several windows, as St. Teresa of Avila said. The windows may be different, even separate, but it is all one light in the room.

Divine love doesn’t have any “because.” It is itself the original act and is not referred elsewhere for an account of itself. Long before there is a “because” in the world, God loves. The act of being God is the act of loving – and this loving created the world. If we are really children of God, we are capable of entering into this kind of love. In fact, we must fundamentally and centrally be this kind of love, if it is true that we are children of God. Just as we much each be a pure I AM, transcendent of all descriptive predicates, so this very I AM must be a great outpouring Fiat, MAY YOU BE, a radiation love-energy. Our attitude toward all other beings will be the will that they may be, and may be fully, abundantly.

Bruteau, Beatrice. The Grand Option: Personal Transformation and a New Creation. South Bend, IN: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2001. Pgs. 42.&117.

Miracles can happen and will happen when we allow God to love us and allow his love to work wonders through us....Jesus assures us that people would be startled into admiration, which would lead to belief, if they experienced a community of believers in that loving unity which is the reflection of the unity of the Trinity. Such a community would really bring about the presence of God with power. Heaps, John. A Love That Dares to Question: A Bishop Challenges His Church. Grand Rapids, MI. Eerdmans Pub. Col. 1998. Pg. 34

There is a special vitality in the Trinity that originates in the interconnectedness of the divine persons. Each person of the Trinity says “yes” wholeheartedly to the others’ love. The Trinity is life-filled and life-giving. Because all love comes from God, the vitality of the Trinity flows in us and through us to one another. In recognizing this force within us, there is an urgency to share God’s love and life outwardly. God calls us to embody in our human relationships the unity of the Father, Son and Spirit. It is this unity that Jesus prayed for in his Priestly Prayer: “...that all may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; I pray that they be one in us...” Jn. 17:21. The unifying love shared in the Trinity, was more than a significant influence in Jesus’ life. It was at the very core of his being. Jesus was consumed by the Triune love and his ministry was basically about sharing this sacred love and bringing all of humankind into the same sacred relatedness. Caltagirone, Carmen L. Friendship As Sacrament. NY. Alba House. 1988. Pgs. 29-30.

...our creation is by love, in love and for love. It is both our birthright and our authentic destiny to participate fully in this creative loving, and freedom of will is essential for our participation to occur.

May, Gerald G. M.D. Addiction and Grace . N.Y. Harper & Row, 1988. Pg. 13.

Of course, in love’s logic, response to human need has its own reason to be, without ulterior goal or external rationale. It is certainly not to liberate and unify them by our efforts and ideals that we seek to love our neighbors as ourselves – as if God’s kingdom were of our own building or its coming determined by our own schedule. Rather, we love them to make manifest a sign that God is lovingly, redemptively at work among them, having become identified with the godless, the godforsaken, and the dead.

Lewis, Alan E. Between Cross and Resurrection_ Grand Rapids, MI. Eerdmans. 2001. Pg. 457.

According to John, the love of Jesus and the Father in the Spirit, is a dynamic relational life of mutual indwelling, which reaches out to embrace us, catching us up in the open circle of divine love.

Edwards, Denis. The God of Evolution_ Mahwah, NJ. 1999. Pg. 20.

No person is greater than his or her prayer life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people who are not praying are straying. The pulpit can be a shop window to display one’s talents; the prayer closet allows no showing off. - Leonard Ravenhill

What is the use of prayer if at the very moment of prayer, we have so little confidence in God that we are busy planning our own kind of answer to our prayer? Thomas Merton. Thoughts in Solitude. (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1956). p. 24.

The childish idea that prayer is a handle by which we can take hold of God and obtain whatever we desire, leads to easy disillusionment with both what we had thought to be God and what we had thought to be prayer....

Robert L. Short (1932-2009), "The Parables of Peanuts" [1968]

Prayer is something that happens to you (**Romans 8:26-27**), much more than anything you privately do. It is an allowing of the Big Self more than an assertion of the small self. Eventually you will find yourself preferring to say, "Prayer happened, and I was there" more than "I prayed today." All you know is that you are being led, being guided, being loved, being used, being prayed through—and you are no longer in the driver's seat. God stops being an object of attention like any other object in the world, and becomes at some level your own "I am." You start knowing through, with, and in Somebody Else. Your little "I Am" becomes "We Are."

Richard Rohr: The Naked Now, pp. 102-103

Pray with your intelligence. Bringing things to God that you have thought out and think them out again with Him. That is the secret of good judgment. Repeatedly place your pet opinions and prejudices before God. He will surprise you by showing you that the best of them need refining and some the purification of destruction. Charles H. Brent

Children do not find it difficult or complicated to talk to their parents, nor do they feel embarrassed to bring the simplest need to their attention. Neither should we hesitate to bring the simplest requests confidently to the Father. Richard J. Foster

The soul which has come into intimate contact with God in the silence of the prayer chamber is never out of conscious touch with the Father; the heart is always going out to Him in loving communion, and the moment the mind is released from the task upon which it is engaged, it returns as naturally to God as the bird does to its nest. What a beautiful conception of prayer we get if we regard it in this light. - E. M. Bounds



Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a stance, a way of being present. It's a way of living in the Presence, living in awareness of the Presence, and even of enjoying the Presence.

Presence knows Presence. The full contemplative is not just aware of the Presence, but trusts, allows, and delights in it. All spiritual disciplines have one purpose: to get rid of illusions so we can be present. These disciplines exist so that we can see what is, see all that is, see who we are, and see what is really happening right now. Richard Rohr: Everything Belongs, p. 31

Cease to pray and thou will begin to sin. Prayer is not only a means to prevail for mercy but also to prevent sin. William Gurnall

Trinity does not merely mean that the three persons enter into relationships with one another, but rather that the persons mutually constitute one another with the relationships. Jackelen, Antje. Time and Eternity. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press. 2005. Pg 192.

God ever works with his two hands, the Son and the Spirit-St. Irenaeus (2nd C. bishop)

Christian prayer rests upon the irreversible fact of the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ and its confirmation in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity is the basis of true prayer as well as its goal. Prayer, as biblical faith understands it, is made possible by the triune God and is directed to this God. - Donald G. Bloesch, "The Struggle of Prayer"

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Links to all the books mentioned in this guide are on The Ark web site: www.theark1.com

I wonder about those whom I love / and those whom I have failed to love / who deserve to be loved, and have loved, / I oft wonder if I myself am undeserving. / How often I see so many who are closed to love. / It's not that they are unlovable, / just that they are unloved. / I believe that none of us is inherently unlovable, / though I see so many who are unloving, / and in many ways unloved. / I have seen far too many, / so many tender hearts, / trying to love those who are not open to receiving that love. / I tried so hard to love those who were unloving. / Looking back over my own life, / because I wanted to believe / that if they would accept my love, / then I had worth. / How often I tried to prove my own worthiness / by loving beyond measure. / After all, / who doesn't deserve it?

In any case, / the more I gave of love, / the more I was given. / That much I have known to be true / in the realm of the spirit. / And yet somewhere in the earthly realm, / here and now, / I also know that so many give and give / without seeking love in return. / We are all worthy, deserving. / I wonder / if we become worthy of love, / if in giving, we receive. / Perhaps it is each of us / who become worthy of love / through love. / We, each and every soul, / are created to love, / thus deserving love. / By loving, / BEING-in-Love / I am One with God / being in Love. / God is / and / by / being in Love. [John Chuchman](mailto:John.Chuchman@torchlake.com) poetman@torchlake.com