

## Notes from “The Divine Gaze” Workshop

“The human eye is one place where the intensity of human presence becomes uniquely focused and available. The universe finds its deepest reflection and belonging in the human eye. I imagine the mountains dreaming of the coming of vision.” John O'Donohue, *Anam Cara-A Book of Celtic Wisdom*

“You are the mirror in which God sees himself.” Sufi maxim as related by Cynthia Bourgeault

“In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all these people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world. . . .

This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud. . . . I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now that I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun.” Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*.

“To the loving eye, everything is real. The art of love is neither sentimental nor naive. Such love is the greatest criterion of truth, celebration, and reality...that unless you see a thing in the light of love, you do not see it at all. Love is the light in which we see light. Love is the light in which we see each a thing in its true origin, nature, and destiny. If we could look at the world in a loving way, then the world would rise up before us full of invitation, possibility, and depth....” Kathleen Raine (Scottish Poet)

“It is a startling truth that how you see and what you see determine how and who you will be.”

“To the judgmental eye, everything is closed in definitive frames. When the judgmental eye looks out, it sees things in terms of lines and squares. It is always excluding and separating, and therefore it never sees in a compassionate or celebratory way. To see is to judge. Sadly, the judgmental eye is always equally harsh with itself. It sees only the images of its tormented interiority projected outward from itself. The judgmental eye harvests the reflected surface and calls it truth. It enjoys neither the forgiveness nor the imagination to see deeper into the ground of things where truth is paradox.” John O Donahue, *Anam Cara*

**Seeing in a deeper way** by Fr. Ron Rolheiser February 13, 2018 Reflection

***How can the grace and teachings of Jesus help us to see in a deeper way?***

**By shifting our eyes from seeing through familiarity to seeing through wonder.**

G.K. Chesterton once affirmed that familiarity is the greatest of all illusions and that the secret to life is to learn to look at things familiar until they look unfamiliar again. We open our eyes to depth when we open ourselves to wonder.

**By shifting our eyes from seeing through jealousy to seeing through admiration.**

Our perception becomes distorted whenever we move from the happy state of admiration to the unhappy state of envy. Our eyesight is clear when we delight in admiration.

**By shifting our eyes from seeing through bitterness to seeing through eyes purified and softened by grief.**

The root of bitterness is our wounding and the way out of bitterness is grieving. Tears clear our eyesight because they soften a heart hardened by wounds.

**By shifting our eyes from seeing through anger to seeing through forgiveness.** Nothing taints our eyesight as much as anger. It's the most debilitating of all cataracts. And nothing cleanses our vision as much as forgiveness. Nobody holding a grudge sees straight.

**By shifting our eyes from seeing through longing and hunger to seeing through gratitude.**

Longing and hunger distort our vision. Gratitude restores it. It enables insight. The most grateful person you know has the best eyesight of all.

"In other words, our mind, heart, soul, and senses are open and receptive to the moment, *just as it is*. This allows us to say, "Just this," and love things in themselves, as themselves, and by themselves, regardless of how they benefit or make demands on us. *Is there any other way to truly love anything?*" Richard Rohr, *Just This*

"Icons are created for the sole purpose of offering access, through the gate of the visible, to the mystery of the invisible, Icons are painted to lead us into the inner room of prayer and bring us close to the heart of God."...(and in doing so they provide) a window looking out upon eternity." Henri Nouwen, *Behold the Beauty of the Lord-Praying with Icons*

Loving Kindness Meditation adopted from Joanna Macy's book *World as Lover, World as Self*

## Closing Prayers

“A creative vision releases an enormous amount of energy and can transform society beyond our wildest dreams...The power of the stars is nothing compared to the energy of a person whose will has been freed from the false-self and who is thus enabled to co-create the cosmos together with God.” Thomas Keating, *The Mystery of Christ*

“The hour is striking so close above me, so clear and sharp, that all my senses ring with it. I feel it now: there's a power in me to grasp and give shape to my world.

I know that nothing has ever been real without my beholding it. All becoming has needed me. My looking ripens things and they come toward me, to meet and be met.” (Rainer Marie) *Rilke's Book of Hours-Love Poems to God*, translated by Anita Barrows & Joanna Macy