



Rest In Me

Session Notes

July - October 2020

What Each Session Includes...

- We transition from the day's events with quiet discussion as everyone joins. How is God working in My Life Today?
- We Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant
- Rest
- Breathe
- Center
- ... *Thoughts may come*
- Silence
- Chime
- Quiet Sharing, Followed by More Group Discussion
- Closing & Resources

Integrating Session Topics with the Practice of Silence

Specific topics with accompanying resources are prepared ahead of time for each week of the series. These are used as a secondary resources.

Because our practice is created to open our hearts to the messages of God and the Holy Spirit may bring, the quiet sharing will start with individuals sharing their experience or any topics coming up for them. This is voluntary, Anyone may speak, or pass.

Once that sharing is complete, the group will decide whether to continue on one of the topics that came up during the initial sharing, or move to the prepared topic.

Why we Start with "Love" as the first topic.

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19



Teacher, which commandment is the most important?
Jesus answered:

"Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself"

~Matthew 22:37-38 2



Rest In Me

Session VII “Blaise Pascal Part II”

24 August 2020

Why we Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant

We will begin our experience with a breathing prayer, a chant. Our breath will connect us bodily with the divine nature of the Sacred One Being that is the source of all breath. Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions because it moves energy out of the head, into the heart. Many people have absorbed criticism about their voices – “your voice is no good, you can’t sing on pitch” – and have learned to shut down their true voices. The same things that make us protect and cover up our true voices, and therefore also cover up our hearing are the same things that make us shut down and cover up our true self, our hearing to life, and our hearing to God. . . .As we learn we can do it, as we are willing to work through those old messages, a whole new field of healing and reconciliation opens up for us. God is breath. All that breathes resides in the Sacred One Being. From my breath to the air we share, to the wind that blows around the planet, Sacred Unity inspires us all. *God is Spirit and His worshipers must worship in the spirit and in truth.* ~ Jn 4:24

Rest

Lie or sit comfortably for a few minutes, feet shoulder width apart, and place one hand lightly over the heart. Without trying to change anything, simply notice the breath. There are many different moments in the breath’s journey; the feeling of it as it begins to come in, when it approaches fullness, as it briefly turns over, and then, when it begins to go out, when it approaches emptiness, and when it turns over again.

Breathe

Take a few deep, slow breaths, and let all the ideas, thoughts, and conversations swirling around in your head flow out of you as you exhale. Breathe slowly and deeply and you will relax . . .slowly and deeply. At each twist and turn of the breath’s journey, our bodies respond in a particular way. We may also notice a presence or absence of sensation, thought, or emotion at a particular stage. We may feel that we want to stay longer in one part of the journey than another – the beginning, the middle, or the end. Simply notice all of these sensations without judgement for a few minutes. Now without particular awareness, take 5 deep and slow breaths. This awareness is not in the mind, it is in the heart

Center

Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space.

There is spaciousness here to hold all your thoughts in loving awareness and without the need for the mind to cling to them. This space is receptive of a wide spectrum of energy that is not available to what your mind alone can sense. This space has its own subtle, loving energy. where your Being is whole and you are free to be your True Self. It is from this place that we begin our Silence. This silence can be an awareness of being suspended, held, and nurtured in a field of love. It is not in the mind. It is in the heart

.....*Thoughts may come.*

If you find yourself engaged with thoughts, simply release them as soon as you notice, breathe, and return to the heart space, to the awareness of the space of love, to the space of love. In some practices, you may have many thoughts arrive, Our intellect is a gift – and this is a practice. Simply bless and release them as soon as you notice them. The same with emotions or feelings that arise.

Sit

We will sit quietly for 20 minutes,

The leader will ring a chime at the end, and allow everyone to slowly come back to join the group. We will have soft discussion of topics that may have come up for us, always aware of the breath, of speaking from the heart.

Chime

At the end of 20 minutes, a soft chime will ring. Everyone will have a few minutes to slowly adjust from the quiet.



Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions

*Seek God first.
Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space, where the breath centers and connects our thoughts, physical sensations, emotions, and awareness and unites us with God*

Guidelines for Sharing after Silence

Emerging from the Silence

As each person emerges from the Silence, the leader quietly explains the next part of the session. We go around the room, one by one. If we choose, we can share a few comments about our experience, or topics that have come up for us. We do not comment on what has been shared, either as the person is sharing, or later, during discussions.

Listening

We simply listen deeply, from the heart, and do not speak. When it is our turn to speak, we try to stay connected to our heart space, and to be conscious of the energy there. We speak “from the heart.”

Sharing

Sharing moves around the room. At the end of sharing, the leader will ask the group whether they would like to discuss one of the topics that came up more deeply, or read from prepared, short readings. Content is prepared ahead of time, and the group may choose to share on the topics that came up, or on the prepared topic. If using the prepared topic

Please keep in mind...

- Participate with utmost clarity, and be mindful of the time
- Listen to others from the heart
- Accept each other completely as we are – non-judgemental
- Seek understanding, not agreement
- Maintain confidentiality and trust
- Speak from your own experience only, your lessons, or your understanding of how God or scripture are working in your life – not about ideas or theology
- Do not comment on what others have shared, give advice, or make suggestions
- Refrain from any interruptions, or from commenting directly to others when they are talking to start a conversation
- Refrain from sharing a second time, until all have had a chance to speak
- It's ok to be silent
- The leader has permission to gently remind the group if the discussion strays from these guidelines

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19



Asperges me Domine

Thou wilt sprinkle me, O Lord

hyssopo et mundabor,

with hyssop and I shall be cleansed,

Lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.

and I shall be washed whiter than snow.

Miserere mei, Deus

Pity me, O God

secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.

according to Thy great mercy.



Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions

*Seek God first.
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Discussion:

What Do We Learn from Blaise Pascal's "Pensees" (Thoughts)? - *Selections From "Why God Hides"*

Pope Francis Says:

"When we have strong feelings of doubt and fear and we seem to be sinking, (and) in life's difficult moments when everything becomes dark, we must not be ashamed to cry out like Peter, 'Lord, save me,'"

Have you ever felt/do you ever feel full of doubt and fear, and as though you were alone? Despite regular participation in the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Confession, despite daily prayers. Would you be comfortable sharing what that has been like?

Blaise Pascal writes: "He [Jesus] says He comes to do 2 things: open some eyes and shut others, reveal Himself to some and conceal Himself from others, simultaneously, and by the same words and works."

What do you think Jesus means by this?

Why God "Hides"

"Only by partially concealing can there be any revealing"

"Scripture is obscure for the same reason God is obscure."

Blaise Pascal

Peter Kreeft

"Pascal's Pensees"

Edited & Explained by

Peter Kreeft

1. "<https://www.Catholicnews.Com/faith-wobbles-sometimes-what-counts-is-calling-for-Gods-help-pope-says/> 10 August 2020 "Faith wobbles sometimes; what counts is calling for God's help"

Discussion:

What Do We Learn from Blaise Pascal's "Pensees" (Thoughts)? - *Selections From "Why God Hides"*

Blaise Pascal also writes: "He came to give light, not to force light upon us. A gift must appeal to freedom. It must be freely accepted as well as freely given. Thus, there must be the freedom to refuse it."

How could this relate to the practice of silence?

Blaise Pascal also writes: "It is true that everything teaches man his condition, but there must be no misunderstanding, for it is not true that everything reveals God, and it is not true that everything conceals God."

But it is true at once that He hides from those who tempt Him, and He reveals Himself to those who seek Him, because men are at once unworthy and capable of God; unworthy through their corruption, and capable through their original nature."

Have you ever found it difficult to "find God"? If so, could you share your experience? What changed for you in your journey? Was there some turning point?

"He came to give light, not to force light upon us..."

A gift must appeal to freedom. It must be freely accepted as well as freely given...

Thus, there must be the freedom to refuse it...

God wishes to move the will, rather than the mind...

Perfect clarity would help the mind and harm the will. Humble their pride"

Blaise Pascal

Peter Kreeft

"Pascal's Pensees"

Edited & Explained by

Peter Kreeft

1. *Pascal's Pensees. Edited, Outlined, & Explained by Peter Kreeft, 1966 A.J. Krailsheimer, London, Penguin Classics, 1996 and Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, 1993, pp. 245-250.*

Discussion:

What Do We Learn from Blaise Pascal's "Pensees" (Thoughts)? - *Selections From "Why God Hides"*

Blaise Pascal writes: "For an understanding of the promised good depends on the heart, which calls good that which it loves, but an understanding of the promised time does not depend on the heart."

Peter Kreeft interprets his writing, saying : "There is enough light for seekers, and not so much that it compels even non-seekers. Scripture is full of clues. Clues must be followed, like sheet music, rather than just heard, like finished performances on records or tapes. Scripture is more like a laboratory manual than like a science textbook, and the laboratory, it is our own souls. It is more like a cookbook, than a dinner, and the kitchen is our own lives."

*Has your practice of silence ever helped reveal something you learned in Scripture?
Has it ever led you to seek answers in Scripture? If so, could you share your experience?*

"Correct interpretation of the Scripture depends on the heart as well as the head..."

Scripture is a love letter not a business report."

Blaise Pascal
Peter Kreeft
"Pascal's Pensees"
Edited & Explained by
Peter Kreeft

30 August 2020

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Responsorial Psalm

PS 63: 3-6, 8-9

R. (2b) **My soul is thirsting for you,
O Lord my God.**

O God, you are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul
thirsts like the earth, parched, lifeless
and without water.

R. **My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord
my God.**

Thus have I gazed toward you in the
sanctuary to see your power and your glory,
For your kindness is a greater good than
life; my lips shall glorify you.

R. **My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my
God.**

Thus will I bless you while I live; lifting up
my hands, I will call upon your name.
As with the riches of a banquet shall my
soul be satisfied, and with exultant lips my
mouth shall praise you.

R. **My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my
God.**

You are my help, and in the shadow of your
wings I shout for joy. My soul clings fast to
you; your right hand upholds me.

R. **My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my
God.**

Reading JER 20: 7-9

You duped me, O LORD, and I let myself be duped: you were too strong for me, and you triumphed. All the day I am an object of laughter; everyone mocks me. Whenever I speak, I must cry out, violence and outrage is my message; the word of the LORD has brought me derision and reproach all the day.

I say to myself, I will not mention him, I will speak in his name no more. But then it becomes like fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones; I grow weary holding it in, I cannot endure it.

Reading ROM 12: 1-2

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Alleluia EPH 1: 17:18

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our hearts, that we may know what is the hope that belongs to our call.

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel MT 16:21-27

Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Then Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to You." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?

Or what can one give in exchange for his life?

For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then He will repay all according to his conduct."