

Song

Relaxing music with birds singing

by Peder B. Helland

“The really important kind of freedom involves attention, and awareness, and discipline, and effort, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them, over and over, in myriad petty little unsexy ways, every day.”

— David Foster Wallace, *This Is Water*

“If, then, I were asked for the most important advice I could give, that which I considered to be the most useful to the men of our century, I should simply say: in the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you.”

— Leo Tolstoy, *Essays, Letters and Miscellanies*

Prayer Leader:

Syndie Eardly

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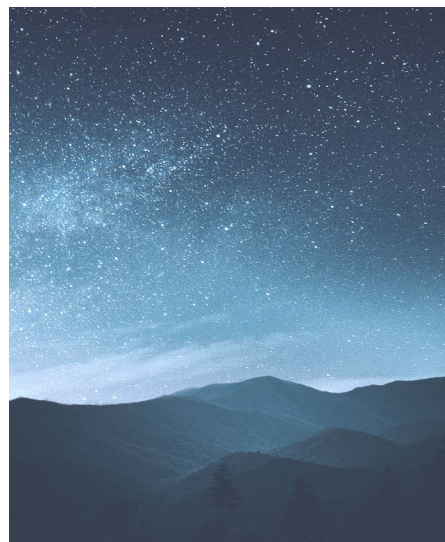


Photo by Clifford Mervil from Pexels

Choose Awareness



Our prayer is characterized by silence ~

Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.

God is present in all our lives.

God cares for us, and

our life experiences are a source
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence
we share from our hearts.

Renew · Refresh · Refocus

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centeringspace@srs charity.org | www.centeringspace.org

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To Ponder

Choose Awareness

by Syndie Eardly

Thomas Aquinas believed that human beings are endowed with both intellect – that is the ability to discern – and free choice. At the same time, he believed that we are hard-wired to move always towards goodness, what we might call God or Love.

Free will is inherent in the very first and primary decision we make, which is to enter into this incarnation to begin with. We don't make this choice in a vacuum. Our spirit does so in cooperation with and with the blessing of God. Intrinsic to that agreement, is the choice we make to participate in the ongoing creation of the world in way that expands love and draws us back into the heart of God.

This is not a singular pursuit. The idea of being “saved” on an individual level is meaningless if the soul of the rest of the world is lost. If God is drawing us ALL back into his heart, then we are truly all in this together and must recognize what that means in our thoughts and actions towards others.

Our first “free will” choice then is simply to choose awareness.

- ♦ Awareness of the availability and participation of the Holy Spirit in our lives as we discern what actions we take.
- ♦ Awareness of the unity of creation and our role in it.
- ♦ Awareness of the choices that we make that are more – or less – in line with our beliefs.
- ♦ Awareness of the other with whom we are moving through this experience.

Being thoughtful and prayerful in this process every day can be the impetus that moves us toward love. Meditation and prayer can breed in us a quiet spirit, an open heart, a discerning mind and willing hands to help others to navigate this shared journey.

Reading

A Beautiful Walk Inside You

By Rumi

Reason says, There are only six directions.
North, east, south, west, up, and down.
There is no way out of those limits.

Love says, But I have many times escaped.

Reason comes to a marketplace and begins haggling prices.
Love wanders away with other business to transact,
something to do with incomparable beauty.

They say, We cannot go barefooted in that courtyard.
There is nothing but thorns there.

Love answers, The thorns are inside you.
Be silent, and pull what hurts out of your loving's foot.

Then you will see gardens and secluded rose bowers
and they will be inside you.

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...