

## CONTEMPLATION FOR JPIC MISSION



Let us be still for a moment; feeling our connectedness to the created world. The world and all that is in it, creatures and humans alike, are extensions of God; expressions of God. Harm or good towards any are harm or good towards oneself. Impelled by this experience, initiating actions to reduce suffering and increase joy in others is the mission of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC).

***Contemplation as an experiencing of oneness:*** Through contemplation we experience this connectedness and oneness with God and the cosmos, growing in love and compassion for every form of life: people, plants, animals, and the planet.

***Jesus mission mantra:*** From Jesus we learn that social action arises from contemplative experience. Evangelist Luke sums up the daily routine of Jesus (Cf. Lk, 6:12-19) from which we draw the *mission mantra of Jesus*: he was in communion with God all *Night*, called around him the new community of disciples in the *Morning* and, with his community, served the people in the *Afternoon* and for the rest of the day. *The mission formula of Jesus is Solitude by night, Community by Morning and Mission together in the Afternoon.*

- ***Night (Solitude):*** When we are present to ourselves in contemplation, we see the causes and forces of suffering and also encounter the original *Imago Dei*, which is imprinted in us. The inward journey becomes a pilgrimage to understand the nature of struggle and encounter the original blessing of being a Child of God.

- ***Morning(Community):*** In contemplation it is realized that we are but one among the multitudes who are loved by God; each person is a manifestation of that transcending love. “Unless the Lord builds a house, its builders labor over it in vain; unless the Lord watches over a city, the watchman stays alert in vain” (Ps 127,1). We can build community with divine assistance; we can become a fraternal community through faithful contemplative practices.
- ***Afternoon (Ministry):*** In prayer what we *See* is made *visible* in mission. The inward movement propels us outward towards the people with compassion, care and healing. Contemplation leads to action, spirituality becomes ministry, and being mystic becomes Prophecy.

Henri Nouwen, in his book *Here and Now: Living in the Spirit*, speaks of “wagon wheel” as a symbol to explain what it means to conduct a spiritually balanced life. Spiritually balanced life is life lived out from the center. The hub or central axis represents our contemplative center, action extends out in the spokes, touching humanity and the world. This center provides energy to move outside of it; without the axis the spokes would have no anchor which allows forward motion of the wheel... without the spokes, the center/axis is deemed extraneous. Contemplation and action work together moving out into the world.

From recognizing the oneness of all living beings, to contemplating Jesus’ mission mantra, and seeing the structure of the wheel as an image to support the development of a contemplation practice, there is a broad influence in how contemplation is the beginning and center of our work in the world. A complete picture of how understanding and practice work together to create this balance that motivates our efforts.

***Methods of meditation and contemplation:*** Various contemplative methods are available; some offered modes are drawn both from Catholic and Eastern practices. Learning to practice regularly means taking time for daily practice.

Resources and facilities which may help in developing a personal contemplative practice:

- Centering Prayer by Thomas Keating: (1) [Contemplative Outreach](#) (2) [Calendar for services/retreats](#)
- Richard Rohr: [Center for Action and Contemplation](#)

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