

Meditating with  
the Living Buddha  
and the Living Christ



Session Four



# Establishing the Posture

Grounding

Aligning

Spaciousness

Heartfulness

Seeking Assistance from the Retinue of Masters



# The Exemplars: Who's Meditating?

The Risen Christ ... Mother Mary ... the Buddha ... Tara ... saints  
and bodhisattvas ... whoever is alive and present to you!

Martin Luther King, Jr ... Mother Theresa ... Thomas Merton ...  
Edith Stein ... Dietrich Bonhoeffer ... Martin Niemoller ... Reb  
Zalman Schachter-Shalomi ... Father Thomas Keating ... Thich  
Nhat Hanh



# Retreats at St Mary's Sewanee

May 5-7, 2023

<https://www.stmaryssewanee.org/events/mindfulness-on-the-mountain-onsite-weekend-retreat/>

June 26-30, 2023

<https://www.stmaryssewanee.org/events/five-day-mindfulness-on-the-mountain-retreat/>



# Neuroscience on Meditation: FA, OM, NDA

FA: Focused Attention

OM: Open Monitoring

NDA: Non-Dual Awareness

(foregrounding objectless awareness, the awareness of awareness itself)



# Buddhist Mindfulness

Buddhist mindfulness aims and sustains attention (FA) in the service of calming the mind and opening the heart (OM).

It then invites looking deeply into the vast and lively awareness of awareness itself (NDA).



# Christian Contemplative Prayer: the laying aside of thoughts

Christian Meditation (John Main, OSB), joins breath awareness with a mantra (FA)

Centering Prayer (Thomas Keating, OCSO) begins with OM and moves into NDA

Attention and Intention: resting in the Divine Indwelling



# The Method of Centering Prayer

The Four R's: Resist no thought, Retain no thought, React to no thought, Return ever so gently to the sacred word (or sacred image or sacred breath)

In other words, don't inhibit or indulge thoughts.

There is a larger context in which these contents are playing out.

Thomas Keating, *Open Mind, Open Heart*, 47



# Cynthia Bourgeault

*The Heart of Centering Prayer, 2-3, 32-3*

*Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*

Centering Prayer of Middle Tennessee

<https://centeringprayermidtn.com/>



# Taking Refuge in the Community

The epidemic of loneliness in our time

“Without mindfulness [affectionate attention], we cannot bear the fruit of love, understanding, and liberation.” (65)

“A church where people are unkind to each other or suppress each other is not a true church.” (67)



# Are We Practicing the True Teaching?

Where there is understanding, there is love.

Please don't practice 'religious imperialism.'"

(69)

Non-violence (71-73)



# What about Anger?

The Sermon on the Mount: a different (non-dual) consciousness

Transforming anger into compassion (83)



# Forgiveness

John Patton, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?*

If I have harmed you, in any way, by my thoughts, my words, my actions, I ask your forgiveness.

If you have harmed me, in any way, by your thoughts, your words, your actions, I forgive you.

If I have harmed myself, in any way, by my thoughts, my words, my actions, I forgive myself.



# Recommended Reading on Jesus

Stephen Mitchell, *The Gospel According to Jesus*

Adyashanti, *Resurrecting Jesus*

Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*



# Dedication of Merit

Whatever goodness, whatever blessing,  
whatever benefit, whatever merit has come  
from our being together, may it ripple out to  
all beings, without exception.