

Thin Places
Saturday, March 4, 2006
6:30pm

GATHERING

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

What is it you want to change? Your hair, your face, your body? Why? For God is in love with all those things, and God might weep when they are gone.

St. Catherine of Siena [1347-1380]

MUSIC

LITANY

Voice 1: We've heard the child's rhyme—

Voice 2: Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

Voice 1: And yet the names have hurt us—

Voice 2: Good for nothing....lazy....stupid....fat—

Voice 1: Skinny, wimp, jerk—

Voice 2: Dumbshit, trash, crybaby.

Voice 1: But there is another voice with different names. Can you hear it?

All: “Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, I had holy plans for you” (Jeremiah 1:5).

Voice 2: This voice is so strong and yet so loving that it will bring you to tears.

All: “God spoke: ‘Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature....’ God created human beings; God created them godlike, reflecting God’s nature. God looked over everything God had made; it was so good, so very good!” (Genesis 1:26-27, 31)

Voice 1: “Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of

this earth” (Matthew 5:13).

Voice 2: “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world” (Matthew 5:14).

All: When we feel sick, defeated, hopeless, beat up, too tired to go on....when we begin to believe all of the negative names we’ve been given, the Voice calls out to us accompanied by an outstretched hand—gentle yet strong: “Little girl....little boy....I say to you, arise” (Mark 5:41).

Voice 1: The Voice has one, clear, strong message—

Voice 2: “What marvelous love God has extended to us! Just look at it—we’re children of God!” (1 John 3:1)

All: And that’s who we really are! Amen.

WORD & STORY

REFLECTION—Names We Call Ourselves

MUSIC

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The gospel writer, Mark, tells of God's personal words of love to Jesus after his baptism: “This is my beloved Son.” John’s first letter tells of the marvelous love that God has given us and that we are children of God.

All: We long to hear God's words addressed to us, but too often we are so overwhelmed by uncertainty about the future, or feelings of powerlessness in the present, that we fail to recognize God speaking to us personally, through others, or through the forces of nature.

We long to hear God's words addressed to us as people beloved by God.

All: Forgive us for listening to—and believing—



We will gather for Thin Places again on Saturday, March 25 at 6:30pm. The theme will be “Healing.” If you’re interested in participating in planning this, talk with Jill Dant.

body, one spirit in Christ that is sent into the world to participate in God's work.

INVITATION

Voice 1: Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of life, to drink the cup of salvation and healing.

All: Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. She who comes to me shall never hunger; he who believes in me shall never thirst."

SHARING THE MEAL

SENDING

CLOSING PRAYER

Response: God of my life, be the God of my heart.

MUSIC

God sends this community into the world to participate in God's passionate love for the world—a love that brings healing, wholeness, peace, and justice to all of creation! Go in peace. Serve God.

voices that call us worthless and unlovable.

Hear God's words speak louder: "You are my beloved sons and daughters."

(silent reflection)

ALL: Loving and merciful God, forgive us when we allow our fears and our worries to stifle your voice of love. As you spoke so clearly to Jesus, speak to us also so that your words of love resonate in every corner of our being and we know that we too are your beloved, on whom your favor rests. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

These are God's words—spoken to us now and each and every day of our lives: "You are my beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Know therefore that in Jesus Christ we are healed and made whole.

All: Thanks be to God!

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

JESUS PRAYER

All: Eternal Spirit, Father and Mother of us all, Holy is your name. Let justice and mercy fill all Creation and let us recognize that every thought and thing belongs to you.

Feed us with the bread we need for today. Forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Stand with us in trial and temptation. Free us from the grip of all that is evil. For you alone are creating our universe, now and forever. Amen.

OFFERING/MUSIC

We respond to God's love for us by sharing what God has first given us—our time, our talents, and our treasures. Thank you for sharing your time with us tonight. All financial gifts support God's mission for Soul Café of exploring and participating in the margins, uncovering the questions, being bold, and being present.

MEAL

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

When we are truly there, dwelling deeply in the present moment, we can see that the bread and the wine are really the Body and Blood of Christ and the priest's words are truly the words of the Lord. The body of Christ is the body of God, the body of ultimate reality, the ground of all existence. We do not have to look anywhere else for it. It resides deep in our own being. The Eucharistic rite encourages us to be fully aware so that we can touch the body of reality in us. Bread and wine are not symbols. They contain the reality, just as we do.

Thich Nhat Hanh. *Living Buddha, Living Christ*, pp 31-32.

PREPARATION

Voice 1: We gather now as one body, joined around the table.

Voice 2: Here we celebrate God's presence among us, united in Christ's spirit, broken and whole all at once;

All: Nourished and hungry, loved and loving, sinner and forgiven; we make one circle of knowing, believing, rejoicing, being, as God lights and rests among us.

THANKSGIVING

Voice 1: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Voice 2: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift our hearts to God.

Voice 1: Let us give thanks to God.

All: We give God thanks and praise.

Voice 2: Through God, all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

All: From the primal elements, God brought forth the human race and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. God made us stewards of creation.

Voice 1: In the fullness of time, God sent God's son, Jesus, to open the way of freedom, peace, healing, and wholeness.

Voice 2: On the night Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, blessed it, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, saying:

All: "Take, eat. This is my Body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Voice 1: After supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and said:

All: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood which is shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Voice 2: God of our fathers and mothers, God of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Rachel, and Leah:

All: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us, and deliver us from the presumption of sharing this meal for solace only, and not for strength; for forgiveness only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one