

Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age

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## Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path

defined

*conscious: awake, aware of, sensitive to, purposeful*

*evolution: gradual development*

*mystical: a way of seeking by contemplation and self-surrender to obtain unity with or absorption into the Deity or the absolute; the belief in the spiritual apprehension of truths beyond the intellect*

*Christian: a follower and imitator of the Jesus the Christ*

*initiatory: of or concerning initiation or serving to initiate; to cause to begin*

*path: the course or direction in which a person is moving*

## Abstract

It is a joy to be scribing the experiences, practices, and wonders of life as a modern mystic and servant of the Christ. The process of writing this dissertation has taken about 3 years in which time I co-founded a spiritual community called *Sacred Balance* and simultaneously began my study as a Bishop and a Doctor of Ministry student. The purpose of writing this dissertation is to explain and validate, in modern terms, the ancient esoteric and transformative lineage and practices of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path. Along with the explanation, I hope to enliven this script by imbuing it with the spiritual as well as the pragmatic nature of the sacraments, initiations, and ordinations that transform novices into conscious Servants of the Christ.

We can understand the *Christ* to be Jesus, the Christ, of Nazareth. We can understand the *Christ* to be the Christ Mind that we are admonished by St. Paul to ‘put on’ in Phillipians 1:5-7, ‘*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*’ This *Christ Mind* can also be equated to the *Buddha Mind* or the enlightened mind that esoteric schools of all times and all traditions have attempted to lead humankind toward. The raising of human consciousness in the remembrance of the Spirit is the aim and hope of this writing. Having been trained, ordained, and vowed in the Way of the Christ, I offer that *Way* here for any who would like to follow it...such as it is, such as I understand and have experienced it, such as many other servants of the *Way* have done across time.

I have taken a mixed research approach in writing as I researched the history and lineage of the Independent Sacramental Movement, reflected on my own experiences of the Mystical Christian sacraments, initiations, and ordinations, and compiled the verbiage of the latter into a

ministers manual (Appendices). According to *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Leavy, 2014), the research approaches taken would be considered *Symbolic Interactionism*, *Phenomenological*, and *Organic Inquiry*.

The history of the Independent Sacramental Movement has had many iterations and transformations as groups experience the lineage, negotiate changes to the lineage based on personal and social experiences, and transformed the structure of the groups and their practices over time and across cultures (Houston, 2009). Certainly, I have personally been impacted by the Symbolic Interactionism of having been a participant and clergy in three different such iterations and finally creating another independent iteration myself.

As the author of this work, I have taken a more Phenomenological approach to the research as I searched my own mystical experience and compared it to the experience of others. In this way, I continued to make sense of my personal experience as well as the shared experiences of those I serve. It happened that my experience of the evolution of consciousness in myself preceded my understanding of the real impact and effectiveness of the practices of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path. As part of this dissertation process, I was moved to find *proof* of the impact I had experienced across a number of disciplines and theories (Hawkins 2020, Marion 2000, Wilber 2017). Here arose the Organic Inquiry approach in which I contemplated these theories in light of my own conscious evolution in order to express the realities of my own process. This comparison of external *truths* with my own internal process resulted in verification and validation of the movement of consciousness supported by the sacraments, initiations and ordinations of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path.

## Literature Review

The process of my literature review began long before I became a student at Ubiquity University. I've spent decades reading, studying, and practicing in the Mystical Christian tradition. The motive and question for my study for the Doctor of Ministry degree has been to reflect the efficacy of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path as a mean of conscious evolution. The Creative Journey to Dissertation class at Ubiquity University and the *Art of Individuation* course I took with the Center for Applied Jungian Studies helped to form the essence of the question of how to claim internally and externally the validity of the consciousness of a female Christian bishop. The process of creating the *Sophia Scepter* (Drake, CAJS course project, 2021) and engaging with a portrait photography project called *Unforgettable: the Over 50 Revolution* (maundymitchellphotography.com), as well as attending the online *Chartres Academy Madonna Rising* program (Ubiquity University, 2021) aided in grounding myself in my identity as a female Christian bishop, as well as in the embodiment of myself as an emerging wise woman. The next step of the research was to gather external validation for the methods of conscious evolution of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path and their efficacy.

As a therapist and social worker, I began by studying theories of transformation, non-ordinary states of consciousness, and the evolution of consciousness (Grof 2019, Jung 1977, Wilber 2017). These along with study and experimentation in the use of psychedelics as a support, led to experiences and realizations that normalized the process of conscious evolution within and outside of Mystical Christianity. To bridge the divide between the two, I began to describe and validate the history of the Mystical Christian tradition and spiritual authority by ordination in apostolic succession and lineage through the works of Keizer (1984), Plummer (2010), Houston (2009), Maciel (2016) and Marion (2000). This fulfilled my desire to satisfy

those who wonder under what religious or spiritual authority ministers like me have been raised up and how the Independent Sacramental Movement came to be.

The literature review addressed the *What, Why, How, Who, When, and To What End* questions that wove their way through my process in the following way:

What? Is the Mystical Christian Path an efficacious and viable means of modern conscious evolution and spiritual authority, especially for women? (Baring 2020, Bellini 2019, Begg 2018, Blackie 2022, Bowes 2018, Houston 2009, Jung 2012, Keizer 2011, Maciel 2016, Peterfeso , Yogananda 2007)

Why? Studies around the quest for the soul (Baring 2020) and the quest for meaning (Fowler 1981), and the quest for consciousness (Hawkins 2020), show us the potential for human evolution and the transformation of our world into a compassionate and caring place. Given the current anti-Christian cultural milieu, I want to show that the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path is different from main-stream, conservative or corrupt Christianity, and that it is a viable avenue for conscious evolution. (A Kempis 2019, Anonymous 2002), Fowler 1981, Houston 2009, Marion 2000, Peterfeso, Stanich 2021)

How? Spiritual technologies across disciplines and traditions include sound, prayer, ritual, mantras/chants, mudras, and transformative plant medicine experiences. Mystical Christianity parallels other traditions in the use of these technologies, as well as offering sacred sacraments, initiations, and ordinations as a powerful means of transforming and raising consciousness (Brown & Brown 2016, Chopra 2016, Forest & Dass 2019, Harris 2023, Hawkins 2020, Khan 2022, Keizer 2011, Keyes 1984, Polan 2018, Richards 2018, Stanich 2021).

Who? Esoteric, gnostic, and mystical traditions have long prepared novices to step onto the way of conscious evolution in a lineage of teachers with spiritual authority and knowledge of

the way of transformation and advanced states of consciousness (Bowes 2018, Fowler 1981, Hawkins 2020, Houston 2009, Keizer 1984, Maciel 2016, Marion 2000, Plummer 2010).

When? The modern world needs many options and avenues for conscious evolution if we want to survive the consumerist, reductionist, colonizing forces that have ravaged our world's people and resources. The time is now for humans to awaken to their potential as new humans, true humans.

This dissertation is the culmination of seeking answers to these questions that I hope will put to rest the world's wondering about whether Mystical Christianity is or can be a useful avenue for conscious evolution. The inclusion of details of the practices, ethics, stages of spiritual growth, and signs of that growth, give both a measuring stick for the practitioner and a means of assessing that growth by the outside observer.

To What End? The result of this study and research has been a personal sense of embodiment of my own soul and its purpose. The landing of the 'female Christian bishop' as my soul mission, and the rebuttal to all who would doubt, dismiss, or devalue the efficacy of the path that resulted in my current level of consciousness and sense of self as a servant to God and humankind are two results that were unexpected but welcomed. The expansion of my support for conscious evolution for women in general, as well as female initiates on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path, has been a beautiful ripening of my own evolving wisdom as I move through midlife as both woman and bishop. This same experience of validation and confirmation has been happening in the female ministers I have ordained in Sacred Balance as I've shared this process with them, and I look forward to sharing the fruits of my contemplations and studies with future ministers in training. For women in general, the rising feminine energies are needed for the balancing of the planet if we are to survive the impact of decades of the toxic

masculine energies of destruction, consumption, and power mongering. The great *end* I have in mind is to be a co-creator in *the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible* (Eisenstein, 2013) to transform the consciousness of humankind and save our home planet, restoring both to harmony.

### Acknowledgements

I am eternally indebted to three Teachers who raised me up in faith and in service: Father Peter Bowes, Mother Clare Watts, and Mother Beatrice Borden. Though I have learned much from many people in many traditions in my long search for truth, these three have been instrumental in my healing and opening to the transformative love of Jesus Christ, Mother Mary, and the Communion of Saints and Angels. I also want to acknowledge my dissertation advisor, Rt. Rev. John Plummer, Ph.D., for his challenges and insights in my research and writing process.

I now serve the Christ under no magisterial authority save the deep communion of my soul with God and the Heavenly Beings who bless and guide me. This freedom from human tradition and doctrine is liberating, but also an immovable yoke set in place by my vows of obedience to the Spirit. As my beloved Sacred Balance community can attest, I am dedicated to being *exquisitely obedient to the moment* by following the movement of the Spirit and the Will of God in each moment and each endeavor. I am blessed to have been called into God's service and to have the joy of passing along the wisdom gleaned over the past two decades of loving service to the Spirit of the Christ in all of humankind.

In joy and wonder,  
The Right Reverend Mary Francis Drake, MA, MSW, DMin Candidate



## *Dedication*

*I dedicate this work to the brave and dedicated women who have allowed me to guide and serve them in the ways of the Spirit...my Mastery cohort in Sacred Balance. May we succeed in honoring God by serving Love and helping to raise the consciousness of humankind.*

*Rt. Reverend, Mother Beatrice Borden  
Rt. Reverend, Master Thea (Elaine) Parnell  
Rt. Reverend, Amma Ruth (Deborah) Cairo  
Rt. Reverend, Master Elise (Audrey) Drake  
Rt. Reverend, Master Isabella (Elizabeth) Musto  
Rt. Reverend, Master Cesarina Grace Savino  
Rt. Reverend, Master Mirabai (Liyan) Wan Doerr*



## *To the Power of Eight*

*“When individuals in a group focus their intention together on a single target, a powerful collective dynamic emerges that can heal longstanding conditions, mend fractured relationships, lower violence, and even rekindle life purpose. But the greatest untold truth of all is that group intention has a mirror effect, not only affecting the recipient but also reflecting back on the senders. The Power of Eight provides solid evidence showing that there is such a thing as a collective consciousness.”*

*Lynne McTaggart (2018)*

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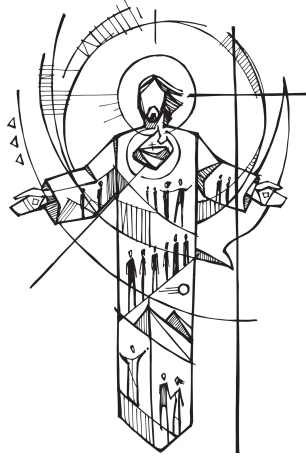
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**Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 1**

**History, lineage and practices of the mystical Christian tradition  
and the Independent Sacramental Movement**

## **Chapter 1: History, lineage and practices of the mystical Christian tradition and the Independent Sacramental Movement**

*‘The task of prayer is to awaken the heart; to awaken it above all to the reality of the Presence of God’s indwelling Spirit. Learning to meditate is to become fully awake; fully alive in the Spirit.’  
~John Main, OSB*

### **Introduction**

Esoteric and alchemical schools across time have often hidden the deeper meaning and impact of their practices, rituals, sacraments, and initiations. Given the anti-Christian/anti-religious climate in society today, I feel it is important to delineate both the purpose and the practices of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path as a viable path for the evolution of human consciousness. This work will be a support to ministers in the Independent Sacramental Movement, as well as an explanation of the esoteric and alchemical process of Christian Mysticism for today’s world.

Having been trained and raised in consciousness on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path, and having taught, initiated, and ordained many others, it is clear to me that conscious evolution is expedited and enhanced by a purposeful stepwise process which includes healing, sacraments, initiations and in some cases ordinations.

Having studied many traditions and theories of conscious evolution, I also wish to add to the literature a guide for independent sacramentalists as a pragmatic tool for raising consciousness using the ancient alchemical and esoteric teachings of the Christ as expressed through the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path in which I was trained and ordained (See Appendix A).

Having learned and practiced the deep arts of stillness, contemplation, devotion, and communion with God, I have a deeper sense of certainty in my vows and my mission as an agent for elevating human consciousness through the offerings of the Mystical Christian Initiatory

Path. This was both a freeing realization as well as the impetus to scour my soul, my motivation, and my vows to ensure that my offerings in this tradition are pure, self-less and powerful. In doing so, I not only reaffirmed my inner knowing and spiritual mission, but I fostered a sense of conviction and confidence in those I have ordained in the past three years.

I hope the writing that arises from this conviction will support other independent ministers in offering these deep and ancient teachings to their congregants and students, thereby extending the reach of the tradition to contemporary seekers of conscious evolution. My vows are to alleviate suffering and uplift human consciousness. I believe this writing will be a vehicle for fulfilling both vows.

### **Beliefs of Christian Mysticism**

Given the nature of the Independent Sacramental Movement and the many Holy Orders that might call themselves Christian Mystics, it's challenging to nail down an inclusive and accurate theology. In this writing, I represent the theological structure I was taught in the Holy Order I belonged to for twelve years, the Order of Christ/Sophia. I have carried this theology into my practices as a priest and bishop, and into the formation of the spiritual community which I co-founded and currently co-direct. The major theological issues include: Jesus as historical figure, the Trinity as the means through which blessings and miracles manifest in the world, Mother Mary as co-Redemptrix, the power of the laying on of hands, and the transubstantiation of the Eucharist (Sacrament of Communion). We also use the Apostles Creed /Nicene Creed (Appendix C) as a proclamation of faith.

In today's New Age and anti-religious culture, the very life of Jesus as a historical figure is being questioned. I have even heard one person comment that He did not die on the cross, nor was he resurrected, but that His ascension, or the idea of ascension, was a metaphor for the

increased vibrational quality of His being by which he *ascended*, or left, this dimension. I am not inclined to argue such things as I have my own personal experience with Jesus as a Divine Being. This experience is irrefutable to me and, I daresay, other mystics who have had similar experiences. Ultimately, a Christian, a follower of Jesus the Christ and His incarnation, must needs believe that He actually incarnated and that the story of His life is true. He came to serve, to save, to heal, and to teach, and as Christian Mystics, we relate to Him on all of these levels.

The Trinity is generally expressed as *The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*. In my teaching, we would say *Creator, Mediators, and Holy Spirit*. The word *Mediators* represents both Jesus and Mother Mary as co-redeemers of the world, since both of their lives and missions were dedicated to that end. Since Jesus said we would do more than he did (John 14:12), we can also become *mediators* like Him; His friends who work toward the alleviation of suffering through prayer, blessings, sacraments, initiations, and ordinations.

I was taught that the Trinity could also be described as *Light, Life and Love*, in the form of a triangle (see Sacred Geometry, Chapter 2) which represented the flow of energy from the unmanifest Godhead or Creator (Light) through the living Mediators' desire (Life) and toward the object of blessing by the movement of the Spirit (Love). We can step into the role of mediator through the use of intercessory prayer and the laying on of hands, two ways that the faithful use to supplicate and direct the blessings and graces of heaven.

The laying on of hands is mentioned in the Bible several times (Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:16, Luke 13:13, Acts 9:12, 1 Timothy 5:22) as the scriptural way of transferring the Holy Spirit, setting people apart in service, and healing. Whether this is done as healing, blessing, sacrament, initiation, or ordination, the physical laying on of hands is a powerful tool for transmission of the Spirit supported by scripture (Mark 16:18).

As in the Catholic and other sacramental traditions, Mother Mary is a main figure of veneration and grace for the Christian Mystic. In my training, She was seen as a powerful co-redemptrix with Jesus, both historically and in the living church. Mother Mary has both the sweetness of a nurturing mother, and the power of the Matriarch, the Mother of God and Queen of Heaven and Earth, that can be accessed through humble prayer and supplication. Her Rosary carries Her divine promises and graces. Her humility and obedience to God, makes her a pure and just exemplar for submitting one's will to God.

The Apostles' Creed is a proclamation of faith often said at the beginning of the Rosary Prayers [8<sup>th</sup> century]. It speaks of faith in God and the life of Jesus, the reality of the Holy Spirit, the universal [catholic] church, the resurrection of the body and eternal life. We begin this prayer with, 'I believe in God, the Father/Mother Almighty.' This is to show our understanding and acceptance of the balanced and dual nature of God that represents the *heiros gamos*, or divine marriage, of the masculine and feminine aspects of God (Jung, 1977).

The Nicene Creed is a deeper, richer, and higher vibrational prayer, according to Hawkins [895]. Since our sect of mysticism is concerned with increasing the vibration of human consciousness, we would use the latter over the former as a spiritual technology for its greater vibrational impact as well as its esoteric depth.

Though not an exhaustive list or explanation, the final aspect of theology that I will address is the transubstantiation of the Eucharist [the sacrament commemorating the Last Supper] during the Sacrament of Communion. The term is defined as '*the miraculous change by which the consecrated bread and wine at Mass become the body and blood of Christ while maintaining their appearance.*' (Mirriam-Webster Dictionary). I explain the energetic and esoteric process of the transubstantiation later in this chapter.



The wonders and mysteries of the Spirit that are experienced when one steps onto the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path are many and varied. There are many correlates to other Christian, Orthodox, and Catholic traditions and practices. Again, the purpose of this writing is not to debate or find fault with other traditions, Christian or otherwise. My hope is that a simple and clear explanation of my training, experience and teachings will be useful to the reader and to practitioners of this *Way*.

### **History, Lineage and the Way of the Wandering Bishop**

At the death of Jesus, His Apostles became *wandering bishops* who traveled out in many directions from Jerusalem and brought the teachings of Jesus the Christ to the people of many nations. They taught, spoke, healed, and gathered communities of like-minded people, baptizing and ordaining as they went along. According to Keizer (1975), the Apostles began ordaining bishops to run these communities as they traveled on to continue spreading the good news. When a bishop's community grew to cover a particularly large geographic territory, the bishop would ordain priests to manage the day to day workings of the community and the offering of sacraments, the holy and sacred rites of the tradition. From there a hierarchy of territory was formed, which later turned into a hierarchy of power giving the bishop magisterial authority over the priests in their territory. Fast forward to Rome, where bishops and cardinals and the Pope hold magisterial authority over the Roman Catholic Church.

Institutional growth nearly always comes with power, resources, and unfortunately, some form of corruption. Removing the magisterial authority and returning priests and bishops of the Christ to the original vow of obedience to the spirit of Jesus' teachings is one way to free up ministers from the undue influence of the institution, though it carries its own risks for misuse of

power on a more personal level. This is the way of the wandering bishop and the independent sacramentalist.

The Roman Catholic Church centers most closely around the apostolic lineage of St. Peter and St. Paul. The eleven other Apostles also have apostolic successions or successors, some of which resulted in institutions or holy orders which continued across time training, raising, and ordaining ministers and priests...each with their own formula for doing so within the common precepts of the church. And so, from the start of Christianity, there are twelve ‘ways’ of the Christ interpreted and promulgated across the globe by the twelve original Apostles [including Matthias who was elected to the 12 after Judas of Kerioth’s betrayal and death], followed by the Apostle Paul whose writings fill much of the Epistles of the New Testament [the letters that follow the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John].

As you might imagine, this web of lineages crisscrossed the globe resulting in many interpretations and expressions of the esoteric teachings. In doing so, many argue the veracity or credibility of certain lineages across time. I tend to agree with Keizer when he wrote about the indignant traditionalists,

*‘They do not contribute to the emergence of new forms of spirituality for what I call the New Humanity—an emergence to which I have dedicated my work as a bishop. The interested reader will find scores of them listed in encyclopedias of independent bishops and online at their many web sites, but not in this book.’ (1975)*

What came from Keizer’s generation of ministers were the following precepts (1975):

1. *fast advancement through certain initiatic degrees;*
2. *ordination and consecration of seemingly “untrained” persons into Holy Orders;*
3. *deletion of the requirement for Masonic membership for initiation;*
4. *ordination, consecration, installation, and initiation of women into traditionally male offices;*
5. *synthesis of older, crystallized orders into revitalized vehicles under new names.*

Given the doctrinal evolution or advancements expressed in these 5 precepts, we can safely say that the face of Mystical Christian ministry looked very different from the 12 Apostles who set out to gather followers of the Christ and express His ways in His time. My own priest ordination was proffered by Father Peter Bowes and Mother Clare Watts, bishops in the winding lineage of apostolic succession of the Holy Order of MANS ([holyorderofmans.org](http://holyorderofmans.org)). They later created their own independent holy order, The Order of Christ/Sophia, in which I was ordained a priest into the *Holy Order of the Golden Cross after the Order of Melchizedek*, the lineage under which my bishops were also ordained with rights of ordination [Holy Orders].

After serving my 7 years of obedience to my bishops, I left that order to become an independent priest. Three years ago, I sought the Bishopric Ordination and was ordained an independent bishop by Master Beatrice Borden [an independent bishop ordained through the Gnostic Order of Christ] and two other duly ordained bishops from the then Sophia Center [formerly the Order of Christ/Sophia, more recently Theama Insitute]. I consider myself an accidental bishop as I did not set out with an aspiration for the post, rather I was lifted to the role by those I was teaching who wanted to come into ordained service. Auspiciously, I was led back to a former priest from the order in which I was ordained...the very woman who led me through the sacraments as a novice, the Right Reverend Beatrice Borden. We have since co-founded and co-directed the Sacred Balance Community.

As ordained independent bishops and practitioners of the Independent Sacramental Movement, Mother Beatrice and I have passed on the lineage of the Holy Order of the Golden Cross to six female Bishops in the last three years. These bishops have chosen to join with us to support our spiritual community. This community now has approximately 40 participants in

varying degrees of study, practice, and service; some being congregants; others, ministers. There are currently 8 Bishops, 7 Priests and 2 Deacons in voluntary co-ministry in Sacred Balance community who live across the United States.

Last year, we created a ‘church’ in Vermont called Sacred Balance as we moved into community living with a central chapel and space for spiritual retreats, services, sacraments, and gatherings. This formal delineation offers us the benefit of tax exemption for our community property, a benefit most appreciated as Sacred Balance has no budget, funds or even bank accounts. All ministers are volunteers, though some, like me, offer services associated with their professional training for a fee. All ministers make their own livelihood outside of the Sacred Balance community and set up their own chapels at their own expense...and happily so. There is no charge for sacraments, initiations or ordinations, and no tie to the founding bishops, therefore no magisterial authority. All ministers are affiliates by choice and are free to express their vows of service according to the movement of their own spirit and their relationship with God.

### **Devotional Practices of the Christian Mystic**

A mystic, being one who knows God through their own experience, practices prayer, meditation, and contemplation regularly in order to deepen in both silence and the ongoing conversation of the soul with the Divine. Though there are many forms of prayer and meditation, Christian Mystics often engage in times of stillness and inner silence in order to elicit the *still, small voice* of God within. As such, meditation is *listening* while prayer is an active asking, speaking, chanting, praising of the inner and outer Divine. Contemplation is the use of the space created by meditation to seek insight, or look deeply, into a particular issue or topic.

Insights arise from the inner worlds to inform, inspire, and guide the contemplative mind. In some traditions this guidance is called *discernment*.

In the process of praying traditional or spontaneous prayers, we reach toward the Divine in supplication and longing. This inner posture draws the Divine forth into conscious awareness. The mystical novice, or student, then cultivates the relationship with the Divine by daily practices of prayer and meditation until the conversation becomes spontaneous, flowing, and consistent. At this point, the prayer, ‘*God’s Will, not mine, be done.*’ (Luke 22:42) becomes the highest aspiration and highest vibrational prayer of transformation [850 on Hawkins’ scale, 2020].

As mystics, we value our own inner experience of Spirit in addition to Christian doctrine, avoiding the dogma of organized religion or popular culture. These inner experiences happen spontaneously to some degree in most people on the planet. The Mystical Christian Initiatory Path is a conscious and methodical journey of evolution using those sacraments, initiations, ordinations, and practices which support and enhance more consistent connection to Spirit. The basic practices of meditation and prayer are essential to conscious evolution. They allow us to tune into the Spirit World and our own Inner Being or innate nature as spiritual beings in the material world. Along with these, the supported use of plant medicine can help us to have deep experiences of Oneness and clarity into our deepest wonderings and our soul’s mission. I consider plant medicine a blessing and a sacrament of sorts [a formal religious ceremony conferring a specific grace on those who receive it] as well as a therapeutic tool. The supported use of psychedelic plant medicines is currently coming to the fore in mainstream psychotherapy and spiritual direction, and has long been practiced by many indigenous cultures (Polan, 2018).

I have also chosen to include some of the work that ministers undertake as they receive the ‘Gifts of the Spirit’ (not to be confused with the ‘Fruits of the Spirit’ which I’ll talk about later). These include, but are not limited to, access to other dimensions, access to the souls of the dead, prophecy, insight, discernment, wisdom, healing, teaching, and leading. It has been my experience that we humans are given different gifts at different times in our lives for God’s purposes. In my own journey, I have had many gifts given as I needed them, and some that wax and wane. It is not because of personal merit that these gifts are given, rather due to our willingness to be used by Spirit to uplift others and glorify God. In being humble and willing, we receive those gifts necessary for us to be ‘*all things to all people*’ (1 Corinthians, 9:19-23) as the Apostle Paul said we could be.

As noted in David Hawkins’ *Maps of Consciousness* (2020), there are many traditional Christian prayers, songs, chants, and teachings that carry a high vibration which imbues the participant or listener with numinous experiences. The practice of these can increase the vibrational consciousness of the practitioner to the level of love, joy, peace, and eventually blissful union with God, the highest vibrational non-duality available to incarnate humans according to Jim Marion, Ken Wilber, David Hawkins, and others. The sacraments and initiations of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path have a similar impact.

Other practices include mudras [hand gestures of blessing], chapel/ritual preparations [incense, candles, crosses, divine images], lectio divina [sacred meditation/contemplation on scripture] and visio divina [sacred meditation/contemplation of icons and images of Jesus, Mary, God, Saints, Angels, as well as Eucharistic Adoration]. The chanting or repetition of prayers like the Rosary, the Lord’s Prayer, the Saint Francis Prayer and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm also have the impact

of bathing body, mind, and soul in the energies of devotional love, transcendence, and energetic transformation (see Appendix C for prayers and other practices).

Finally, service to God and people, or the art and act of ministry, becomes, as Tagore said, the way to joy.

*“I slept and dreamt that life was joy.  
I awoke and learned that life is service.  
I served and realized that service is joy.”*

*~Rabindranath Tagore*

### **The Power of Sacraments, Initiations, and Ordinations**

David Hawkins, MD, PhD, created a system for calibrating the vibrational quality of esoteric, religious, and philosophical traditions, teachings, and teachers. His broad work in this area is summarized in *The Map of Consciousness* (2020) which delineates the exponential scale from 0-1000 upon which Hawkins charts the levels of conscious experience from the lowest vibrations of shame, fear, pride and anger to the more sublime aspects of human consciousness including acceptance, love, peace, enlightenment, bliss, and pure consciousness (Hawkins, 2020).

According to Hawkins’ scale, Jesus vibrated at the level of 1000, being one of several incarnate Avatars across time. He, along with Krishna and Buddha, vibrated at the level of consciousness that has the capacity to change the energetic mind of the whole of humanity. Along with this energetic impact of the incarnate consciousness of Jesus the Christ, His teachings also measure in the 500-1000 range with the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Last Rites vibrating at 500, and the Sacrament of Communion (also called the Eucharist) at 700.

The premise of this scale is that humans partaking of these sacraments, practices, and teachings would be lifted up in vibration and, with repetition and devotion, would then carry these higher vibrational frequencies in their human energetic systems, thereby impacting the energy of people around them in the resonant field. The impact of this resonant energy is termed *darshan* (meaning to sight or appearance) in the eastern esoteric traditions. One might call it the blessing that comes from *seeing* or being in the presence of a Saint or other spiritual being.

Some of the Christian prayers and practices that carry these high vibrations include the Blessing Mudra (as seen in iconography of Jesus blessing, 650), the Lord's Prayer (650), the Saint Francis Prayer (580), the Nicene Creed (895), the New Testament Bible (Lamsa Bible 560, King James Bible 540), the genuflection (540), Rosary Prayers (550), the devotional use of incense (540), kneeling to pray (540), the greeting '*Peace be with you.*' (855). (Hawkins, 2020) There are many other aspects of devotion, contemplation, prayer, and religious practice that carry similarly high vibrations in the Christian tradition as well as other spiritual/religious traditions.

One of the most empowering aspects of Hawkins' work is the premise that as one raises their consciousness to higher and higher levels, that being's vibration offsets many hundreds of thousands of lower vibrational beings...as a rising tide lifts all boats. In Christian Mysticism, this would be the power of blessing, intercessory prayer, healing, absolution, and grace of a highly developed and devotional servant of the Christ.

- *One individual at level 700 counterbalances 70 million individuals below level 200\**
- *One individual at level 600 counterbalances 10 million individuals below level 200*
- *One individual at level 500 counterbalances 750,000 individuals below level 200*
- *One individual at level 400 counterbalances 400,000 individuals below level 200*
- *One individual at level 300 counterbalances 90,000 individuals below level 200*
- ***Twelve individuals at level 700 equal one Avatar at 1000.***

*\*This scale is exponential.* (Hawkins, 2006, p. 118)



Let us begin with the sacraments as they are available to all seekers, congregants, and novices. When a seeker learns of the offerings on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path, they might first want to attend the daily *Contemplation and Communion* service or a *Sunday Service* where they would be offered teachings and the blessing of the Sacrament of Communion. [Unlike other traditions, mine allows anyone to receive Communion without prior confession or baptism.] Having experienced the Sacrament of Communion, their spirit may be drawn to further practice, study, or the process of preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism.

For the Sacrament of Communion, the chapel is prepared, generally by a deacon or priest, by lighting the altar candles, incensing [preferably with the high vibrational frankincense], setting up the altar for the Communion with wine and bread/host, and welcoming congregants. All of this is done in the spirit of devotion and connection, preparing the sanctuary intentionally. The presiding minister then leads a meditation/contemplation and opening prayer to welcome the spirit of the Masters, Jesus and Mary, along with the Saints, Angels, and other helpers of our souls, into the chapel space. In doing so, a liminal [threshold] and numinous [otherworldly] space is created in which congregants can bask in the peaceful energy of the spiritual world as it overlaps with their everyday mind. Many, if not most, congregants feel peace and a sense of acceptance in a chapel that has regularly been blessed by these practices and sacraments as the energies accumulate with the focused intention and attention of the faithful and the presiding ministers.

The presiding and assisting ministers then anoint themselves with holy oil [blessed with the energy of the lineage of their spiritual Teachers], another high vibrational act of supplication and surrender to the Spirit. They then speak the *Cleansing Prayer* (Appendix A) to clear their hearts and minds in preparation for the sacrament. The energetics of the chapel, the altar, and the

*Law* [triangle of candles delineating the trifold energies of Light, Life and Love; Creator, Mediators, and Holy Spirit or the Trinity] all open with the intention, consecration, and prayer [word/logos] of the ministers. This creates an energetic portal through which the ministers draw down the blessings of Jesus and Mary in the form of the high vibrational Sacrament of Communion.

The Sacrament of Communion (Appendix A) uses the power of the Word [vibration of the devoted and empowered voice of the minister] to move the energies of the Christ into and through the substance of the wine and bread. This transubstantiation is an energetic alchemy that makes of the bread and wine the *body and blood* of Christ. This essentially means that the bread and wine take on the energy of the Christ much like a homeopathic remedy takes on the essence of the substance used to create it. When faithfully consumed, it impacts the energetic vibration of the recipient at a high level and, like a tuning fork, tunes the mind, heart, and soul of the recipient into the heavenly reality. This is the essence of a mystical experience.

Though some Christian churches offer communion as a *remembrance* of Jesus the Christ, the mystical sacrament is an actual transubstantiation...the magic, mystery, and miracle of the Sacrament of Communion. When congregants kneel, open their hands and arms, and open their mouths and hearts to receive this *Bread of Life* from the officiant, they are truly blessed. Most feel the transformative nature of this blessing in a visceral energetic way that convinces their minds and souls of the Presence of God in the sacramental exchange. You will find more detail on the Sacrament of Communion in Chapter 2.

If a congregant continues to receive the teachings of the life and lessons of Jesus and the Sacrament of Communion, they may be introduced and invited to the Sacrament of Mystical Baptism [the opposite order of sacraments is generally held in traditional Christian settings].

## Baptism as a Sacrament and an Initiation

In his book *The Religion of Tomorrow* (2017), Ken Wilber uses the 1981 work *Stages of Faith* (Fowler) to present the *Clean Up*, *Grow Up*, *Wake Up*, *Show Up* aspects of the development of consciousness. In Christian Mystical terms, the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation would constitute the *Clean Up* as priests conduct a life review with the goal of forgiveness, mercy, and compassion for self and others. The Sacrament of Absolution [or Confession, see Appendix A] also uses the laying on of hands [blessing, Hawkins' level of 650] to transmute the negative energies of shame and guilt, thereby allowing healing of the past [both personal and ancestral] of the novice. The *Grow Up* process would be accomplished during the learning stage of Christian Mysticism when students study and practice the precepts of the life and teachings of Jesus; The Great Commandment being among the most powerful of these: *Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself* (Matthew 22:34-40). This leads a person to the understanding that all humans are equally beloved, though not necessarily equally awakened in the spirit of unity.

*Waking Up* is the mystical experience of transcendence...the reality of experiencing oneself as a spiritual being having a human experience. The Initiations of Illumination and Self-Realization are proffered upon the student as they wake more fully in transcendent consciousness and, potentially, in service to the Christ Consciousness [deacon/priest ordinations]. Levels of consciousness are intuited by those in spiritual authority [bishops] who are able to discern the level of *clean up*, *grow up* and *wake up* accomplished by the novice.

In terms of *growing up*, we find the development of cognition from self-centered (one's opinions and ideas are seen as inherently true and right thereby creating an 'us' against 'them' divisiveness), to other centered (all people are important and equal), to God-centered (oneness,

non-duality). As Wilber notes, when a person's development is not progressing on all four aspects of growth, discord and disharmony can result. For example, a person who has not healed their past (*clean up*) will have a hard time growing up into the unitive consciousness that is required for a truly equitable society, due to trauma reactions and mental habits of egoic self-preservation. Likewise, a spiritually advanced consciousness (*wake up*) does not ensure that a person has grown in terms of their sense of self in relation (*grow up*). Since all humans are on the trajectory of growth in all of these areas, we can choose to trust that God's plan is unfolding for each person over many lifetimes, and help those who are open to support in evolving in consciousness.

Having studied in the Hindu yogic tradition of Kundalini yoga, I find many parallels with Christian Mysticism as a process of conscious evolution. This process is not a matter of study alone [jnana in the yogic tradition], but also devotion, chant/song, and service [bhakti, japa, karma yogas respectively]. The Christian postures [asanas] are also impactful energetically and would include kneeling, blessing hand postures [mudras], genuflection, prostration, and bowing.

In my tradition, the Sacrament of Communion is dedicated to the *raising of the consciousness*. A priest or bishop offers this sacrament and attunes to the energies of the recipient as well as the progression of their devotion. The opening of the heart is an essential energetic aspect of the evolution of consciousness as, in Ram Dass' words '*The mind gets in the way of a clear view of God.*' (Forest & Dass, 2019). As the student moves toward becoming a servant, their sense of identity or *self* moves from the egoic world mind to the soul and ever deeper into the God-Self which is inextricable from the *Mind of Christ* and the *Mind of God*. "*Let that mind be in you that is in Christ Jesus.*" and "*Not I, but Christ in me.*" (Phillipians 2:5;

Galatians 2:20) are two ways that the Apostle Paul spoke of the experience of the Christ Mind and God Consciousness (non-dual consciousness for Hawkins, Wilber, and Marion).

The *Show Up* stage of Wilber's integral process would include a student requesting ordination in order to serve God, Love, and people, in whatever way Spirit guides them as an independent minister. In the Independent Sacramental Movement, ordained priests and bishops are endowed with the spiritual authority to offer sacraments, pass on the teachings of the tradition, support the transformation of novices and, at the bishop level, to ordain deacons, priests, and bishops as continuers of the work (Bowes, 2018; Fowler, 1981; Harris, 2023; Keizer, 1975; Plummer, 2010; Stanich, 2021).

The preparation for the Sacrament [and Initiation] of Baptism for adults, as I was taught it, is the act of retrospectively one's life [child baptism is also offered though in an age-appropriate format]. This retrospection allows for a person to witness their life with an eye toward giving and receiving forgiveness, appreciating the *Golden Thread* of how God supported our spirit's survival through the stuff of life. It also allows for healing from the wounds of the psyche which too many suffer from trauma and abuse.

Ken Wilber would describe this process as the 'Clean Up' of his Clean Up/Grow Up/Wake Up/Show Up formula for conscious evolution (2017). This clean-up, however, is not just a recounting of events, rather an energetic scan of the wounds and stunted development that most people experience in early life. This energetic scan is a recollection and review of the emotional, psychic, and spiritual experiences in life to find those that still feel *alive* or continue to be *triggers* for emotional regression or projection. Through the use of pastoral counseling, prayer, forgiveness, absolution, and spiritual support, the baptismal candidate clears the way for the energetic blessing of the sacrament.

The waters of baptism *wash away sin* - a very charged word which could be substituted in the mystical way to *errors and misgivings*, or *missing the mark*. Holy water is water blessed by the ordained officiant to carry the power and grace to wash away those errors and misgivings. It is used in my mystical tradition to anoint the eyes/sight and tongue/speech of the baptismal candidate. Being imbued with the spirit by a minister, holy water can be used to bless and cleanse in many situations, and used to restore a person or place to grace, just as it is when used during the Sacrament of Baptism.

The consecrated oil of the mystic baptism ignites the fire of the spirit and initiates, or begins, the opening of the heart, throat, 3<sup>rd</sup> eye, and crown chakras through the laying on of hands and the use of sacred ritual. These energy centers are widely known in the east and west as chakras, and viscerally experienced in the energetic sacramental workings of Christian Mysticism. When the retrospection is complete, the baptismal candidate feels a lightness of being and a joyful anticipation of beginning again having been healed and *born again* in the Spirit.

The retrospection process takes about a month and the integration of the Sacrament of Baptism takes around 40 days. During this time, the priest or bishop supports the seeker with pastoral counseling, intercessory prayer, and the Sacrament of Communion, in order to increase grace. The newly baptized person is encouraged to receive Communion as often as possible in order to support their budding relationship with Jesus Christ and Mother Mary. Unlike some traditions, the Mystical Christian *Way* does not enlist shame or guilt; rather grace, acceptance, compassion, and love are the formula for uncovering the shining light of the Spirit that God has placed in each human soul.

During the Sacrament of Baptism, the priest or bishop uses the power of laying on of hands, consecrated oil and water, the inclusion of the Sacrament of Communion, and the intentional movement of spiritual energy from the heavens through the crown of the initiate, sparking an arch of light from the crown to the pituitary and pineal glands and to the heart. This energy and light ignites the Godseed in the recipient like sunshine on the bare ground of springtime, coaxing the seed of faith and transformation to germinate, grow, and bloom. The Mystical Baptism connects the soul to Jesus Christ and Mother Mary as their Spiritual Teachers, aligning them with the lineage of the Christ, and the Way of Jesus the Christ.

### **Esoteric and Mystical Teachings of Jesus the Christ**

Many people who are unfamiliar with the Mystical Christian tradition, look to mainstream Catholicism or Protestantism as the foundation of Christianity. Though Catholicism maintained the sacraments as grace-filled and transforming ritual, the institution has become corrupted in many ways by the misuse of power and spiritual and financial authority, and many devout Catholics are choosing to turn away from that tradition. In my experience, much of Protestantism stripped the mysteries from the *Way of the Christ* and so left communities in a state more like moral social gatherings than transformative mystical experiences. Worse yet, in today's world, conservative evangelicalism has turned Jesus' teachings into a sword for division and discord. Christian Mysticism returns to the spiritual, mystical, and energetic roots of the *Way of the Christ* in order to *seek and find* what Jesus promised is available to the faithful.

The Gospel of John in particular, speaks in esoteric and energetic terms. Jesus taught about the mysteries and realities of the personal, inner divine when he said things like:

*My Father and I are One.* (John, 10:30)

*If your eye be single, your whole body will be filled with Light.* (Matthew, 6:22-23)

*This and more you shall do.* (John, 14:12)

*Know you not that you are gods? (John, 10:34)  
Elijah came and they did not recognize him, and they did to him whatever they  
pleased. (Then they understood that He was speaking of John the Baptist).  
(Matthew, 17:12-13)*

Jesus spoke of the Spirit of the Law, rather than the letter of the Law that religious authorities of His time were espousing and promulgating, to the detriment of the masses. Similarly, the dogmatism and magisterial authority claimed by the leaders of some modern Christian denominations have done the same. The esoteric [defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as “*very unusual and understood or liked by only a small number of people, especially those with special knowledge.*”] teachings of Jesus focused on the spiritual energies that move through the pure-hearted humans who want to know God personally.

The steps to move into this loving relationship with the Inner Divine were treasured and protected by early esoteric schools. These schools and their followers were subjected to torture and death as heretics during the nearly 400 years of the Inquisition (1478-1834). Esoteric schools went underground and created secret societies and secret means of teaching the *Way of the Christ* as seen in *Meditations on the Tarot of Marseilles: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* (2002). Before its use as a modern divination tool, the Tarot was meant to be a symbolic representation of the teachings and stages of the way of transformation, according to the *Tarot of Marseilles*. The symbolic teachings of the *Tarot of Marseilles*, when applied methodically, take a seeker through the paces of the transformative process, revealing the transcendent knowing [gnosis] and transformation [evolution of consciousness] that arise from the serious application of these lessons and the necessity for vows of service to God.

Sects like the Knights Templar, the Cathars, and the Rosicrucians claimed to be the wisdom keepers of the ancient esoteric teachings which predated Jesus’ incarnation. Jesus became ‘the Christ’ or *christed one*, through this ancient alchemical process, or great work



[*magnum opus* of transcendence as Jung would call it]. He then lived out His 3 remaining years in public life teaching, healing, blessing, performing miracles, and leading seekers toward the same state of union with the Divine.

Spiritually speaking, Jesus came as an intercessor, or redeemer,...one who used Himself up for the sake of helping to restore others to their divine nature. In the eastern traditions, it might be said that he took on the karma [consequences of negative or sinful actions] of the world. He gave of Himself *even unto death on the cross* (Phillipians, 2:8) that others might have Life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). Though his life and death are interpreted by some as myth or malignancy, there is no doubt that many people went on to follow His *way, truth, and life* (John 14:6) into deep union with the Inner Divine. For them, He would be considered Savior, Teacher, Friend, and Guide. I include myself as one who has followed the *Way of the Christ* and found the reality of union with God to be true and transformative. I also include myself among those who refer to Jesus the Christ as Savior, Teacher, Brother, Friend, and Guide.

Unlike other Avatars [a manifestation of a deity] who have incarnated on the Earth, Jesus did not come just to teach, heal, or lead, He came to *take on the sins of the world*...the karma of the world under the weight of which souls could not free themselves (John 1:29-32). All who practice intercessory prayer are imitators and continuers of the Christ, experiencing personally the weight of such a vow of service. The esoteric teachings clearly warn those who step upon the Way to do so with purity, humility, contrition, sobriety, and dedication. These qualities are necessary because one who becomes more conscious becomes more powerful. This is the reason sacred vows are taken...so that one's self-interest does not infringe on the decision to use the wisdom and power of the Spirit for God's purposes alone. These warnings are warranted as

history shows many powerful men corrupted by their desires and impulses toward greed, lust, gluttony, and power.

Becoming One with the Father [or Father/Mother/God as my tradition addresses the Deity] is the goal of all mystical schools and practices around the world. The word yoga means ‘union’. All traditions have spiritual aspiration to this union, sometimes called ecstatic bliss, annihilation, or non-dual consciousness (Marion, 2000; Wilber, 2017). Even Einstein said, ‘*I want to know God’s thoughts. Everything else is just details.*’

Jim Marion presents the levels of development on the Christian Mystical path in his book *Putting on the Mind of Christ* (2000). Marion’s premise is that the unfoldment of consciousness is a natural and organic process for anyone whose soul yearns for transcendence. His own evolution of consciousness happened mostly after he left religious training in the Catholic church. Having experienced many seemingly haphazard mystical experiences, Marion presents the stages he experienced using St John of the Cross’ *Dark Night of the Soul*, as well as Wilber’s integral levels of transcendence, even unto non-dual consciousness. Like Wilber and Marion, Hawkins (2006) describes the ultimate state of embodied consciousness one can achieve while incarnate as non-dual consciousness.

Having undergone these levels of conscious evolution myself, some under the tutelage of Christian Mystical Masters, some not, Marion’s book helped me to identify the levels of consciousness that I had attained. This allowed me to further describe the states [phenomenological experiences of nonordinary states] and stages [a stabilization of a state of consciousness] of conscious evolution to the students and ministers under my tutelage. Marion’s structured analysis and description helped to relieve the angst around the profound changes in

consciousness that my group and I were undergoing including experiences of oneness, bliss, temporal shifts, energetic and spiritual powers, and experiences of healing.

Having trained in psychology, social work, and therapy, I have long been a student of Carl Jung and his *magnum opus* entitled *The Red Book* (2012). Supporting others on the journey of individuation and spiritual alchemy, I noted the parallels of Jung's journey with that of Marion (2000), Wilber (2017), and Hawkins (2006), as well as the esoteric teachings of *Meditations on the Tarot of Marseilles* (2002).

In Keizer's book, *Incarnating the New Humanity: Practicing Yeshua's Lost Halakah for Spiritual Rebirth*, (2011) it is postulated that Jesus the Christ, Mother Mary, and Mary of Magdala, incarnated in order to teach Jesus' way of transformation, or the way of transcendence into the state of Christ Consciousness, sometimes called enlightenment or *Christ Mind* or the *New Human*. These great Teachers were not seeking followers or believers, so much as students who wanted to transform their consciousness through the ancient esoteric traditions which Jesus taught for the Golden Age in which there would be a *christed* civilization established upon the earth (Anon., 2002).

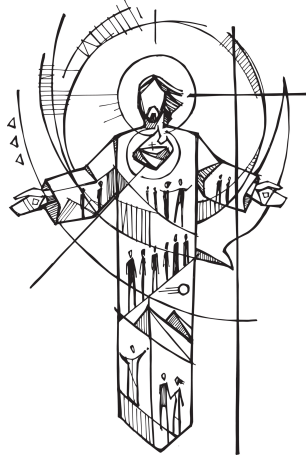
Early Christian Mystics such as Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, also describe the telltale signs and wonders of conscious evolution or transcendence in their works *The Interior Castle* (Starr, 2004) and *The Dark Night of the Soul* (Starr, 2003) respectively. The stages and *rooms* in Teresa of Avila's celestial castle, relate to the unfolding of consciousness and the experience of transcendent states up to and including oneness with the Divine, or non-dual consciousness.

As an independent bishop, I follow a long line of wandering bishops who serve under the guidance of the Spirit rather than under a human or institutional authority. This is an important

aspect of the independent ministry which can function to remove institutional biases and power struggles, leaving the way of ministry in the hands, hearts, and minds of those who have taken vows to serve God, Love, and humans. Though humans can easily be led astray by charismatic charlatans, rest assured that the Divine will not be fooled into empowering those who have intentions outside of love. Those who misuse the powers of the Infinite bring repercussions upon themselves that are not worth the momentary gains they obtain for self-serving purposes. (See Chapter 2 for more on the Ethics of Ministry).

As a bishop with rights to ordain [authority to ordain ministers, also called Holy Orders], it is my responsibility to raise up and empower those who are willing to work toward and uphold the direct relationship with the Divine that is required for remaining exquisitely obedient to the moment, the eternal now, in which we reside with the Godhead. This responsibility is guided by Spirit and ends when those empowered through ordination take on the mantle of the vow of service for themselves. In this way, not only are individuals raised up in consciousness and service, each one that is raised participates in raising the whole...contributing to the evolution of the collective human consciousness.

The next chapters will introduce the hows and whys of the transformative path with specific information on the remaining sacraments, initiations, and ordinations. Specific Mystical Christian practices and prayers, and the wording for the Mystical Christian Sacraments, Initiations, and Ordinations can be found in Appendix A. Before moving on to these esoteric practices, let us consider the ethics of ministry that all spiritual directors, ministers and counselors must espouse to ensure the psychological, emotional and spiritual safety of congregants and novices.



**Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 2**

**The Ethics of Ministry and Magic**

## Chapter 2

### The Ethics of Ministry and Magic

*'Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me for anything in My name, I will do it.'*

*~Jesus Christ, John 16:12-14*

Ethics in religion and ministry is an essential conversation given the nature and power of influence of those who hold positions of spiritual authority. We are all aware of how some in spiritual authority have misused their positions for their own purposes and gratification. The milieu of spirituality is fraught with examples of priests, teachers, gurus, and spiritual leaders giving in to the temptations of power, greed, lust, fame, and self-aggrandizement. Many honest, God-loving people have been harmed by the practices of those who misuse the power of God in the Name of God. I shudder to think of the spiritual consequences for such acts and pray healing on the victims and God's mercy on the perpetrators.

There are some who would say that the holy order in which I was trained was a place where such things happened. I do not dispute that some people felt they were harmed by some of the rigid and intrusive practices that were instituted in the name of spiritual growth and guidance. What I will say for myself is that, despite the imperfections of leadership, I got what I was seeking; that is, a deep and abiding relationship between my soul and God. As a priest, I vowed obedience to my bishops for 7 years before earning the right to practice my priesthood independently. I fulfilled those vows and became an independent priest in 2013.

During the pandemic of 2020, people began to gather around my online offerings of daily Communion and Rosary prayers, and began seeking spiritual direction and ministerial training, I had to grapple with the question of how I would offer such things while assuring a safe space

that would retain autonomy for each participant. I chose to do this by freely offering services, classes, and training in the Independent Sacramental Movement. After having been ordained a bishop in that tradition, I chose to offer training and ordinations for deacons, priests, and bishops in independent ministry. I chose to form a closed community online for seekers in the Mystical Christian tradition, teachings, and practices, that was focused on the sacraments and the liturgical calendar [Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, and Ordinary Time]. This community is called Sacred Balance.

As time went on, and more people were asking for spiritual direction and minister training, I set up a modest monthly *sponsorship program* which allowed for me to spend more time offering spiritual direction outside of my private counseling practice and university teaching positions. This has been a good exchange and balance as it allows me the financial freedom to continue with offerings and one-on-one spiritual direction and training. Some people participate in sponsorship solely to support the Sacred Balance community and ministry, which is a blessing for me in being able to continue making these offerings.

In order to have an ethical ministry, one must be transparent, consistent, and non-authoritarian. Even though there is a hierarchy of competence (Wilber, 2017) when it comes to the knowledge and experience of training students, deacons, priest, and bishops, there is no hierarchy of power or importance. All ordained ministers are independent and remain in association with the Sacred Balance community [and now *church* in VT] on a voluntary basis. They are free to serve in the way that the spirit moves them to serve and are under no magisterial authority or obligation to participate in any of the offerings in our community forums.

That being said, most ministers have chosen to remain in the community, giving and receiving sacraments and other offerings, and participating in the practices of the liturgical

calendar year. Several of the bishops have traveled together to offer *earthworks* across the country and in other countries at their own expense, as well as supporting our virtual prayer and blessing temple which we call Avalon. The community is small but dedicated. Their devotion is deep, and their camaraderie is life-enhancing for all. They all support one another inside and outside of online offerings, classes, and retreats. Though there are two *co-founders*, there is a consensus-model decision making process among the ministers.

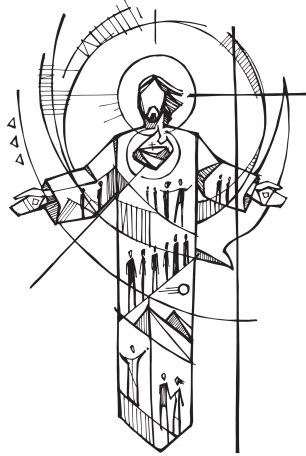
The form of Sacred Balance has grown organically as membership and ministry has grown. We are devoted to reconciling any differences or issues with kindness, compassion, and care; holding fast to the precept of the free will of each of our friends who gather. The thoughtful formation and continuation of our group around the precepts of integrity, inclusion, honesty, diversity, autonomy, confidentiality, and respect has served us well and is in line with the *ethical standards* of the *Common Code of Ethics for Chaplains, Pastoral Counselors, Pastoral Educators, and Students*, (<https://www.apchaplains.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Common-Code-of-Ethics.pdf>), the *Constitution of the Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests* (<https://arcwp.org/about-us/constitution/>), as well as the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics ([counseling.org](https://www.counseling.org)).

In addition, Sacred Balance is a living organism that grows and changes with the prophetic guidance and calling of all involved. As such, there is much freedom and flexibility for each participant, while holding the united mission of serving God through serving people in the ways that Jesus Christ lived and guides us to do. In this way, a minister will bless and serve the needs of those who are sick, poor, lonely, or distressed, as Jesus did.

Equal in importance to the ethics of ministry, is the ethics of *magic* [theurgy]. As noted in several other chapters, the spiritual powers and gifts that are given to the faithful servants of



God must be used for God's purposes only. The vow of obedience to God's Will is part of all levels of minister training and ordination. It cannot be stressed enough that these powers have been given for God's purposes alone, and that ministers are responsible to God, their community, and common law for their use or misuse. Thankfully, our body of ministers are sincere in their vows and in their desire to imitate the Christ in all they think, say, and do. Their close relationship with God, Jesus, and Mary, admonishes them to remain pure of heart and intention, and to submit their earthly will to God's Will, which is only and always in the best interest of each soul they serve.



**Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 3**

**Esoteric meaning of symbols, rituals, sacraments, and initiations  
of the Mystical Christian Tradition**

## Chapter 3

### Esoteric meaning of symbols, rituals, sacraments, and initiations of the Mystical Christian Tradition

*'If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy,  
frequency and vibration.'*

*~Nikolai Tesla*

#### The Altar: Setting the Table

The altar is the sacramental table in a chapel or church. This holy space is generally reserved for clergy, and it is treated with much care and devotion. In my training and teaching, the altar is set with sacred images or icons and some or all of the following, depending on the sacrament, initiation, or ordination to be celebrated: a cross, candles, holy oil, holy water, and the tools of the sacraments [chalice, paten, brass and copper baptismal dishes, etc.]. Great care is taken in preparing the altar and the chapel, cleaning it, incensing, and setting the *table* [altar] for Communion. A mystic will feel the energy of the space and, using incense, clear away any stagnant or negative energy, thereby lifting the energy of the chapel with conscious attention and intention.

Shrines are another form of devotional *table* upon which devotees place images and items that remind them of a certain aspect of Christian life, the lives of mystics and saints, or other holy aspects of creation. The Sacred Balance chapel has a Mother Mary Shrine before which people often kneel to offer up Rosary prayers and supplications to the Blessed Mother.

However simple or ornate an altar is, it is consecrated [made sacred] through prayer and intention as a material place of honoring the Spirit. As such, spaces and places that have had good care and many devoted visitors, will hold the energy of the Spirit and will eventually become *thin places*. These *thin, or sacred, places* hold and magnify the energy of devotion of the ministers

and congregants, thereby making it easier for the next person who enters the space to connect deeply with Spirit.

Incensing with frankincense [or other sacred substances] creates a high vibration, as does moving the censor [incensing bowl or implement] in a counter-clockwise motion. This motion calls the energy from *heaven* into the *earth* of the chapel. A clockwise motion does the opposite. In the tradition in which I was trained, the altar is set in a different fashion for different sacraments, initiations, and ordinations (See Appendix A for details). These forms have meanings and energies related to the movement of blessings, the increasing of light, and attuning the energy system of the recipient to higher and higher vibrations and intensity of light as they make progress along the mystical path.

### **Sacred Geometry**

*Sacred Geometry*, in the context of this writing, is the use of the basic geometrics of the circle, triangle, square, and spiral as part of the chapel work [sacraments, initiations, and ordinations]. The candles on the altar form one triangle while those in the *Law* [3 candles placed in front of the altar inside which the minister performs the rituals] form another. The purpose of the *Law* triangle is to delineate the space where the vowed minister [deacon, priest, or bishop] would conduct the holy rites. In this space, the minister kneels in supplication and draws down the energy of the Christ into whatever sacrament, initiation, or ordination is being performed. The triangle is also used as a sign of the movement from *Creator to Mediators to the Holy Spirit*, once again depicting the flow from the unmanifest to the manifest world.

As mentioned, the spiral is seen in the act of incensing in either a counter-clockwise or clockwise direction. The spiral creates a channel of energy between heaven and earth, drawing down or lifting up respectively.

The sign of the cross is a well-known symbol that holds much historical import even in pre-Christian times. The cross represents the intersection of spirit [vertical arm] and matter [horizontal arm]. The center of the cross represents the heart of the human being where these two aspects of our humanity merge and express as divine love incarnate. This symbol is used in the act of genuflection [making the sign of the cross on the body; brow, heart, left shoulder, right shoulder], another high vibrational act of devotion according to Hawkins (2020).

The circle symbolizes God, the Creator. Sometimes there is a dot at the center of the circle. This would represent the godseed or GodSelf, the place from which manifestation emerges. The square symbolizes matter made manifest.

### **Minister as Magician**

As the altar is set and the movements of words, songs, incense, prayers, and spiritual energy blend together, they create a portal or vortex through which the minister draws and directs the blessings being bestowed [sacraments, initiations, and ordinations]. One might consider this divine magic [theurgy] in the sense that it is an unseen force that is felt by many. This *force* which one could call spirit, blessing, or grace, works its magic on the recipient by transforming their energetic body and releasing the Light of Christ that resides within.

The vows of the minister/priest to use this magic only for God's purposes are paramount, as mentioned numerous times in Chapter 2 and *Meditations on the Tarot of Marseilles* (Anon. 2002). A person who moves this powerful energy of creation for their own personal interest would be wise to reconsider its use as there are spiritual consequences [karma] that far outweigh any personal benefit they might gain [personal magic vs. sacred magic].

## Sound as a Spiritual Technology

Music, song, chanting, and the ringing of bells all accompany the altar rituals as they all create a vibration which has an impact on the mind, body, heart, and soul of the listener (Hawkins' 2020; Inayat Kahn, 2022). Specific sounds or words [mantras] have specific vibrations which change the frequency of the brain and open the mind to insights and experiences from the higher realms or heaven worlds (Goldman & Goldman, 2017). All spiritual and religious traditions use sound and vibration in one form or another as a spiritual technology and aid to transformation.

### The Word

*'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing has been made that was made. In him was life and that life was the light of men.'*

*John 1:1-4*

The human voice creates a vibration that, like music, also has an impact on the brain, body, and heart of those in proximity of its frequency. Words said in anger have a particular impact on people. Words said with gentleness have another impact. Holy words recited with devotion and conviction have the power to move heaven and earth. This can be seen in all aspects of life and has also been studied extensively in popular culture. Even humming has been found to have positive mental, spiritual, and emotional impact. (Goldman & Goldman, 2017).

The *Word* in the context of Scripture, represents the causal vibration of manifestation which is attributed to God, and through God to Jesus Christ who is often called the *Word* or *Logos* [principle of divine reason and creative order]. As ministers, we can use the *Word* to create a vibration imbued with desire and prayer that results in the movement of spiritual energy

for the purposes of uplifting humankind; individually and collectively. The sacraments are holy rituals that provide the form for this movement. The officiating ministers are the means through which that form is imbued with the spirit through the spoken word, the heartfelt devotion and the passionate longing for grace to descend and bless the recipients.

### **Blessings and Light**

Blessings are another way to move energy by the laying on of hands. In my experience, a minister places the palms of their hands on the crown of the recipient's head [and sometimes other places like the heart, shoulders, back, hands or feet] and, using the *Word*, calls down the blessing into and through them, moving it through their hands and into the crown channel [chakra] of the recipient. Most people can feel this energetic movement when being blessed and have a visceral and deeply emotional experience of release, comfort, encouragement and/or peace.

In the tradition in which I was trained, the Trinity of Light, Life and Love make up another triangle and another reality of the movement from Spirit to Matter [heaven to earth]. There are numerous references to *Light* in the Bible. Jesus refers to himself as '*the Light of the world*' (John 8:12) and admonishes us that if our eye be single, '*our whole bodies will be filled with light*' (Matthew 6:22-23). This spiritual *light* is seen and experienced mostly through inner vision, though many saints and holy people have shone light that is perceptible to the human eye. This is why religious icons and paintings in all traditions often show holy or enlightened people with halos or auras of light.

As described in Chapter 1 in relation to the Sacrament of Baptism, the energetic body of a person is activated by the sacraments. Each sacrament and initiation activates more and more light within the body which shines from the center of the person and radiates outward. The

Initiation of Illumination (see Chapter 5) follows the Sacrament of Baptism as a blessing that seals the light into the person after they have dedicated themselves to spiritual exercises to expand and intensify this light (Appendix B). People often have profound experiences during the sacraments and initiations wherein they see and feel the refined energy of light building in their energetic bodies and radiating into their aura and the environment around them. This light is the source of life and the conduit of love that opens the heart and beatifies the countenance of the blessed person.

Once the Illumination has settled, people often have a deep desire to serve as they have experienced the healing, peace, and joy that the Spirit brings. The Initiation of Illumination is sometimes proffered by the use of a ritual called *The Mass of the Christos*, since the initiation increases the Light of Christ in the recipient. (Appendix A) Those inclined toward service can train in the diaconate, the first level of ministry in my tradition. Deacons are the keepers of the chapel and the congregation. The vow taken in this tradition is a lifetime vow of service to God and humans. Deacons are trained to offer the retrospection and the Sacraments of Baptism and Communion [sometimes called Missionary Communion for Deacons].

As a Deacon grows in dedication, devotion, and service, they may be called to a higher and deeper spiritual merging with God. Though there is a veil, or barrier, between the mind, heart, and soul of a person and the Godhead, this veil is removed in the Initiation of Self-Realization, through the laying on of hands. It is difficult to explain in layman's terms how this is done and how one discerns the right timing for initiations and ordinations. The bishop and priest that have been trained and sensitized to the movement of spiritual energies can see and feel how the preparation of the heart, mind, and soul are going for those novices or students engaged on the initiatory path. In my community, ministers confer regarding a student's preparation and



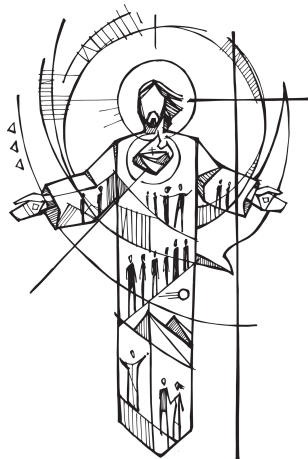
readiness for initiations and ordinations. This group discernment process supports our inclusive and mutually respectful minister body.

Some religious organizations have requirements or *rules* that novices must follow with strict guidelines of conduct, devotion, and obedience. As independent practitioners, each bishop decides how to train novices and when to offer the initiations and ordinations. It is rare that a person of the world who is engaged in the vices [envy, pride, jealousy, anger, gluttony, lust, and sloth or laziness] would want to be of service in ministry. Generally, the love of God and the intimate relationship with Divine Beings that develops over time, have transformed the novice and cultivated the *Fruits of the Spirit* [love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control]. These *Fruits* create such an atmosphere of gratitude and a desire to serve that it is clear that the novice has good intention and integrity.

Once a deacon has received the Initiation of Self-Realization, they may want to begin study to become a priest. The priest is ordained with rights to offer six of the seven traditional sacraments [Baptism, Confirmation, Communion, Confession, Marriage, Last Rites], excluding *Holy Orders* [the rights to ordain priests and bishops]. The priest vows (Appendix A) are more comprehensive and last for eternity. The priest serves in the chapel performing sacraments, services, and other offerings to support the spiritual development and devotion of the congregants. They also radiate more light as they grow in the power of the priesthood. A priest could be considered a Christian Bodhisattva, someone who vows to keep returning to earth lifetime after lifetime to help alleviate suffering and elevate consciousness.

Some priests will feel called to a deeper and more elusive merging in Spirit that leads them to God-Realization. This is the level of God Consciousness or non-dual consciousness that Hawkins, Wilber, Marion, and others speak of. The Mastery Initiation, which sometimes

includes the Bishop Ordination with Holy Orders [rights to ordain], is performed by 2 or 3 other bishops who agree that the priest seeking the bishopric understands that depth of commitment, surrender, and personal sacrifice required for Mastery. The role of bishop is to guide and ordain other priests and bishops, but the spiritual transformation that follows the Mastery Initiation is even more difficult to fathom from the beginner's mind. I will leave that conversation for those who have this rare and unique desire to be used up in service to God.



**Conscious Evolution on the Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 4**

**The Daily Round, Rounds of the Moon and the Yearly Round**

## Chapter 4

### The Daily Round, Rounds of the Moon and the Yearly Round

*'For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.'*  
~Ecclesiastes 3:1

#### The Daily Round

In the 24 hours of a day, the Creator has given us the microcosmic expression of the whole of life. Beginning at dawn with the rising Sun, we arise from our sleep [incarnate or are born...in Spanish giving birth is called 'dar la luz' which translates to 'to give light']. We rise and turn toward the Light of Christ through prayer, meditation, contemplation, and Communion. These daily practices or disciplines make disciples of us - followers of the Christ.

Throughout the day we are admonished to *pray unceasingly*. This means to have our inner observer focused on prayer, praise, and conversation with God. The more functional part of our brain can easily go about the business of the day with the inner prayer acting as *mood music* or an energetic theme of inner contemplation of the Divine.

Inner prayers become like seeds which are germinated in the light of love and bear the *Fruits of the Spirit* (Galatians 5:22-26) in our humanity. These virtues work in us to overturn our baser motives that would lead to the vices that tend to take people away from goodness and God. One can easily see how the vices of envy, pride, jealousy, anger, gluttony, lust, and sloth would lead us to a life of suffering and sin [here understood as *missing the mark, or making a mistake, or assuming one is separate from love*]. The feeling of separation is both the consequence of the vices, and also the motivation to turn toward the good.

In the course of the day, when a thought, word, or deed are instigated by one of the vices, we can use the laws of forgiveness and absolution to quickly repair our errors, sins or misgivings. Thoughts and words exude energy as much as behaviors do. Energetic

consequences arise that need our attention and action to repair. Asking God for forgiveness is one way of doing this. The Catholic tradition requires that those who wish to partake of the Sacrament of Communion [Holy Eucharist] seek Confession [absolution, atonement] before receiving the Sacrament. This is another way of clearing negative energy from base motives or vices in order to make space for the blessings of the Eucharist to land and take hold of one's spirit. When one has done wrong, the human psyche and soul can respond with defensiveness, anger, resentment, guilt, or shame. These emotions tend to create barriers to connection with others and with the Inner Divine. The repentant heart seeks forgiveness and re-alignment with Love through confession and absolution.

Gratitude and thanksgiving are other practices that foster a continued connection to the Divine or to Love. If we love God, it makes sense that our relationship with God would be maintained and strengthened by noticing, appreciating, and thanking the Creator for the abundance of graces and gifts we receive each day.

At dawn, we go to the inner and/or outer chapel to commune with the Divine in prayer and meditation and to come like children to the feast of the Christ offered in Communion [birth, infancy]. In the morning, or beginning of our day, we express the joy of living and thanksgiving for the life-giving break of our nightly fast [childhood]. In the noon hour, we express thanksgiving for our noonday meal, the height of the Sun's energy [or youth]. In the evening we express thanks for our family, health, home, and evening meal...the sustenance of our bodies [adulthood]. Finally, at night, we thank God for the experiences and lessons of the day, and the coming rest of night [aging, or the final rest of death] during evening prayers. Many traditions teach ritual prayer that offers a steady tempo of gratitude and attention to the Spirit throughout the day.

## **The Round of the Moon**

Astrology is the ancient wisdom of the movement of the cosmic bodies that we see in the sky...sun, moon, stars, and planets. A day is the daily round of the sun. A month represents the round of the moon through the cycles of new moon, waxing moon, full moon, and waning moon. Like the four seasons of the year, the four aspects of the moon represent new beginnings, active movement toward achievement of our aspirations, and the resting and releasing of activity as we await a new cycle.

The moon cycles past the planets as the hours of the day progress, adding an additional energetic imprint on the cosmic energies that impact our lives. The moon has often been seen as a representative of the feminine aspect of the Divine, while the sun represents the masculine aspect. The moon is receptive and reflective, the sun is active and radiant. These pairs and dualities are represented in all aspects of life...good and bad, dark and light, heaven and earth. The dance of the cosmic bodies, including the earth, can teach us much about ourselves and our cyclical unfolding. Knowing the phases of the moon and the planetary influences on the moon can help us understand the part of our human instrument that is feminine in nature...the feeling, intuiting, and emoting aspects. Women also have a monthly cycle that mirrors the influence and intensity of the moon cycles in their very bodies. This is another reminder to purge, express, rest, and recuperate on a regular basis.

Although not essential or determinative, tuning into the phases of the moon can help us to understand our humanness and the energies that color our experience in our bodies which are made of the elements of earth, air, fire, and water. The quintessence, or spirit, is considered the fifth element which humanity brings to the dance of Creation...the incarnate Spirit.

## **The Yearly Round**

The yearly round is represented by the liturgies of the seasons of the year and the spiritual meaning and devotional practices related to each. If we look at the Celtic or Pagan calendar, the year is split into 8 parts, quartered by the equinoxes and solstices. Some believe that in early Christianity these older calendars, along with sacred ceremonies and power places, were usurped and transformed into Christian holidays and holy days...the most significant being Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints Day. These correspond with the Seasons of Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall, splitting the year into quadrants that help us keep the tempo and pace of the temporal and spiritual year through the stories of Jesus and Mary's lives, as well as the development of the early Christian church.

In the Christian traditions, the yearly round is generally focused on the two major seasons of devotion, the Advent Season and the Lenten Season. These Seasons correspond to the lives and lessons of Mother Mary and Jesus Christ. They also correspond to the rotation of the Earth around the Sun by having major observances on or near the Solstices and Equinoxes that mark the four seasons of the year: winter, spring, summer, and fall.

In the same way we can look at the daily round as representing our lives, the yearly round can be equated with birth and childhood [spring], youth [summer], adulthood [fall], and aging and death [winter]. The Advent Season begins 4 weeks before Christmas, making space for four weeks of reflection and contemplation on the coming of the Christ Light at Jesus' birth. Christmas [December 25] is celebrated just 4 days after the Winter Solstice [December 21] – the shortest day of the year. The Solstice represents the return of the life-giving light of the Sun as we turn in the yearly calendar toward spring.

In preparation for the *birth of the Son/Sun*, we reflect on Mary, the Mother of Jesus. For some, the weeks of Advent celebrate hope, peace, joy, and love – four attributes of the Way of the Christ. The person of Mary, the Blessed Virgin, becomes our exemplar for these qualities as She humbly prays for the coming of the Christ prophesied in her Jewish tradition (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7). She is approached by the Archangel Gabriel with an invitation to be the physical conduit through which the Messiah [the Christ Child] incarnates. She gives her *eternal yes* when she says to the Angel Gabriel, ‘*Behold, I am a Servant of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your will.*’ (Luke, 1:38) in reply; and so begins Her journey of being exquisitely obedient to the movement of the Spirit in all aspects of Her life.

For modern Christian Mystics, this is the phase of preparation; of emptying oneself of all we have gathered over the calendar year and making a space in us for the light to emerge once again. Every year we go through this ritual of preparation by inner reflection and surrender to Spirit. The Holy Season is celebrated in a quieter, more internal way than the popular culture approaches this time of year. Nonetheless, the slower pace and inner view bring a powerful and joyful anticipation for the next yearly round, the coming of the Light of Christ into the world, and the rebirth of the Spirit in our own beings.

Meditations on the life of Mary and her humble surrender to the Spirit help spiritual seekers to deepen in relationship with the Being that is Mary, the Holy Mother of Us All. We pray to Her, meditate on Her, read about Her, imagine ourselves imitating Her ways, and develop a devotional attitude toward this One for whom the Litany of Loreto was written...praising the many names and aspects of the Holy Mother.

As the thin time of the Winter Solstice approaches, Christian Mystics tune in to the rarified numinous space that this shortest night and biggest hope imbues in us. Short days give



many hours of darkness which is illumined by candlelight and contemplation. Stillness opens to joy as we feel the returning energy of the masculine Son/Sun into the Earth. Mystics take advantage of thin places and times to focus our attention on the energies of the spirit world and commune with God more deeply and simply than other times of year when the busyness of everyday life looms large and loud around us.

The celebration of the birth of Jesus on December 25 and the Epiphany on January 6, when the Wise Men came to venerate the Newborn King, follow the Season of Advent with celebration, exaltation, and wisdom. We prepare to step into the newness of another yearly round. We are all born again in the Spirit...fresh and new for another cycle with new aspirations and new hope. Thus ends the Advent Season.

After about 6 weeks of what the Catholics call *Ordinary Time*, the second major Devotional Season begins on Ash Wednesday, the Season of Lent. In juxtaposition to Advent, Lent is a season of penance, remorse, suffering for the suffering of the Christ, and inner growth as we turn away from the impulses of the world and the flesh in order to participate with Jesus in a period of sacrifice and supplication. Some see this time of year as a dreary time of strained self-discipline and punishment. As Mystics, we know that we gain wisdom and strength as we imitate the Christ by following Jesus' life from His Baptism through his inner preparation to take on the role of the Messiah, the Savior by Sacrifice, through His Passion celebrated during Holy Week.

Jesus spent 40 days in the desert after His Baptism by John the Baptist, His cousin, and the precursor of the Christ. In his time of fasting, prayer and meditation, Jesus was tempted mightily by the things of the flesh...lust, greed, and power. He maintained his fast and confounded the forces of darkness that were testing His worthiness for the job of Savior.

Proving Himself worthy, He returned to teach, bless, heal, cure, perform miracles, and generally disturb the spiritual authorities of His time. He was cajoled, ridiculed, persecuted, and chased from town to town as he gathered the followers of the new Way, the new dispensation of living as God wants us to live...that Great Commandment to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.

The three years of Jesus' *public life* are documented in the four Gospels of the Bible as well as the more recently discovered gospels of ancient texts found near Nag Hammadi, Egypt in 1945. The epistles, or letters, that follow the four gospels are the writings of various apostles, in particular the Apostle, St. Paul, a contemporary of Jesus.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the Old Testament in all aspects of His life, persecution, and death. And so, the Lenten Season moves across 40 days' time culminating in the events of Holy Week, from Palm Sunday to Easter Day. The Lenten Season is celebrated at different dates depending on the tradition one follows. The Catholic Church follows the solar pattern of starting Holy Week on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, a practice using the Gregorian calendar. In this way, the date for Easter changes from year to year unlike the date for Christmas. The Eastern Orthodox Church, among others, celebrates Easter using a different calendar, which sometimes differs from the date used in the western world.

On the first day of Holy Week, called Palm Sunday, we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on the donkey, as prophesied. This is one time that crowds gathered publicly to praise Him as the Messiah and to sing the Hosannah to Him. After that, the week turns somber as Jesus prepared for His anticipated persecution and death, gathering followers in a way that disturbed both the Jewish hierarchy and the Roman rulership of His time. On Holy Tuesday, Jesus gathered His disciples on the Mount of Olives and continued teaching them about

His coming death and resurrection. Holy Wednesday commemorates when the disciple, Judas bargained with the Sanhedrin and was paid to betray Jesus. Holy or Maundy [meaning command] Thursday marks the evening of the Last Supper including Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and commanding them to love one another as He has loved them. The Eucharist was instituted at the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday by Jesus as a way of remembering Him and communing with His Spirit. This is also the evening of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed and sweated blood for the sins of the world. He asked His disciples to watch and pray, but instead they fell asleep in His hour of need. He was then arrested by Roman soldiers led to Him by Judas. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss on His cheek as that was the agreed upon symbol for the Romans to know who to arrest.

Thus began the torture of Jesus through the night as the Sanhedrin brought Him before Herod and Pontius Pilate to try to find Him guilty. Both rejected the pleas of the Sanhedrin until they forced Pilate to punish Jesus by scourging and crucifixion. Pilate, being a Roman leader, conceded in order to keep the peace in the city of Jerusalem. Good Friday represents the day of the Crucifixion when Jesus was nailed to the Cross and hung for 3 hours before commending His Spirit to God and dying. Good Friday is generally venerated in silent prayer from 12-3 pm, the hours Jesus was on the Cross. Often people walk the Stations of the Cross, the path that Jesus took to Calvary [also called Golgotha, meaning the place of the skull for the shape of the rock hill]. The ‘good’ in Good Friday represents the good that would come from Jesus’ sacrifice for the release of sins [negative karma]. He was the sacrificial lamb, the intercessor who expiated the sins of the world and continues to do so for each of us when we engage with the energy of His Being - the Living Christ.

For the faithful, Holy Saturday is a day of waiting for the promised Resurrection at Easter morning sunrise. In my tradition, the Sacrament of Communion is not served from Monday through Saturday of Holy Week. After this weeklong break, the Eucharist is celebrated once again on Easter morning, followed by a feast in honor of Jesus' victory over death, thereby freeing humans from the illusion that we are simply physical beings, and saving our souls for His Kingdom. The knowledge of the eternal and spiritual nature of the soul is liberating as well as empowering. After Holy Week, we begin the 40 days of honoring Jesus' walking the Earth in His resurrected body and continuing to teach and bless in His omnipresent and omniscient form.

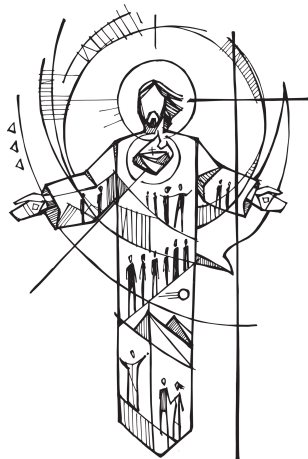
The Lenten Season continues past Easter with the veneration of Jesus' time from Resurrection to Ascension, and Pentecost [the descent of the Holy Spirit]. Returning to *ordinary time*, the Catholic liturgical calendar gives a beautiful flow of celebrations of Saints Feast Days and Holy Days of Observation, all of which can be used to focus prayer, meditation, liturgies, and practices.

### **Going with the Flow**

Following the flow of days, months and years, our beings come to resonate with the patterns of creation; of birth, life and death. The duality of opposites and the cyclical rounding of time are the milieu in which we incarnate in order to live, learn and love. When we are aware of this divine flow of life, we can attune ourselves to its natural patterns and relax into the development and unfolding of our lives as spirits in the material world. These cycles make life more steady, more understandable, and more fluid, granting us the opportunity to move consciously and gratefully as we go along. The result of this alignment is peace of heart, mind and soul. The Fruits of the Spirit arise in us. We become gentler, wiser, and more aware of ourselves as creatures of nature and spirit. We become more aware of the suffering of others and

more inclined to assist them by our example and by our good works. Thus, the life of service arises naturally from attuning to the beauty and grace with which God has created our planet and our earthly lives.

*See Appendix A for specific prayers including the Rosary where Jesus' life is depicted in the Mysteries of the Rosary. See Appendix A for youtube video links for further teachings on the Yearly Round.*



**Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 5**

**Supporting the Energetic and Alchemical Process  
of Transformation for the Individual**

## Chapter 5

### Supporting the transformational and alchemical process for the individual

*‘Let the seeker keep on seeking until he finds, and when he finds,  
he will experience the ecstatic awe of Godhead, and in that consciousness he will ascend,  
and he will share Sovereignty with God over all things.’  
~Gospel of Thomas, original opening summary and Logion 2, via Keizer, 2011*

As noted in Chapter 1, people are drawn to Mystical Christianity for many reasons. Most often, however, they have a call in their soul to feel and know a deeper truth than what they have found in mainstream religious or spiritual offerings they have engaged with. Many contemporary Catholic and Christian churches have congregations who follow the church doctrine and dogma as a way to connect with the Divine and secure the blessings of peace while on earth and in the afterlife. Mystics want to know the truths of God, and so are generally dissatisfied with merely believing...they want internal, experiential proof of God’s Presence, peace, and power. Like myself, those drawn to mysticism have had experiences in life that their mainstream traditions cannot explain to them, and they have a longing to know more and experience the greater depths of the spiritual world.

There are mystics in every religious tradition who are often seen as outsiders and even heretics. The popular definition of a heretic is a person holding opinions at odds with what is generally accepted. Interestingly, the etymology of the word shows the deeper meaning as *able to choose*. Mystics choose to seek a personal experience of God; that experience that is written about by the saints and holy sages of all times and all religions. For me, that meant seeking until I found the path that suited my soul and manifested enough convincing spiritual experiences of Jesus, Mary, the Holy Spirit, and God that I wanted to continue going deeper.

Sometimes folks seek a spiritual community out of desperation, seeking relief from loneliness and suffering. The spiritual community and the sacraments can help them find more peace of mind and heart, and maybe a spiritual home where they can be accepted and supported as they grow in faith and knowing.

The yogic traditions in which I have studied, have four aspects of the spiritual way of life called: Sadhana [daily practice], Sangha [community], Satsang [teachings], and Seva [service]. In Christian Mysticism, all four of these are essential parts of the path or the way to enlightenment or Christ Consciousness. The Sacred Balance community offers opportunities for congregants to participate in the teachings, community gatherings, daily sacraments, and service to the spiritual community and beyond. As a new congregant gains the Fruits of the Spirit that arise from these offerings, they may decide to step onto the *Way* by seeking the Sacrament of Baptism.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the process of preparation for Baptism is called the retrospection [looking back]. This process allows for past trauma, pain, and misgivings to be released, forgiven, and healed by the Spirit. A priest or deacon witnesses the story of a congregant's life and, through the alchemy of witnessing, prayer, and the Sacrament of Confession [Absolution or Atonement], helps to release the burdens of pain, shame, guilt, and feelings of unworthiness. It is often the case that early life experiences create patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting that express as self-fulfilling prophecies and self-sabotaging behaviors. Once a person is aware of these patterns, they can begin anew to establish healthier and more authentic ways of being in the world.

The preparation for Baptism is altered for children (see Appendix A) and others unable to complete the retrospection process. Though our community has not had experience to date with



either in our short 3 years of ministry, we would accommodate all and any who wanted to be baptized in a way that would be meaningful and appropriate to the circumstances.

The Sacrament of Baptism is the chapel ritual that washes away the past. In this way, baptism is often described as being *born again* or *made new*. The Sacrament of Confirmation, one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic tradition, is included in the Mystical Baptism, as the Holy Spirit is drawn down into the crown of the congregant to ignites the fire of the Spirit within. It is also the affirming of the relationship of the soul with the Divine Beings, Jesus Christ and Mother Mary. Jesus and Mary become the inner teachers and way-showers for the formation and unfolding of the soul.

The spiritual exercises and practices that support this formation and unfolding include the continuation of prayer, meditation, contemplation, and receiving of the Sacrament of Communion. At this point, one is considered to be a *student* of the *Way of Christ*. A student would work with a priest regularly to support their inner life and outer functioning in the world of faith, family, relationships, and work. The priest would offer spiritual exercises to deepen the student's relationship with God, Jesus, and Mary by increasing exposure to the Light of Christ and the Presence of God which brings a *peace which passes understanding* (Philippians 4:7) and continues the healing and upliftment of the student's soul. (See Appendix B for spiritual exercises, devotions, and prayers.).

Although not all priests are counselors by profession, they act as spiritual or pastoral counselors and guides as a student works to transform their life into a God-centered way of being. Counseling, or sharing wisdom, is a way of ministering to souls and is one of the Gifts of the Spirit given to those who vow themselves into the service of God. As a student dedicates themselves to the *Way of Christ* by continued involvement in the community, sacraments,

practices, and devotions, they grow in the Fruits of the Spirit. Once again, these *fruits* are: love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. It becomes quite clear to the priest and congregation how a student has grown in these attributes...not because they were installed in the student, but because they were uncovered as the natural expressions of the soul. The more one feels loved by God, the more relaxed one becomes, and the more radiant the natural light of the Christ shines from the center of one's being.

Light exercises help a student to expand the radiance of the Christ Light within. These exercises also support the student in basking in that healing light which is the Presence of God. The spiritual senses begin to awaken, and students often feel and see the inner light increasing in size and intensity until their whole bodies and auras are radiating the beautiful light of the Spirit from within. The radiance of light is perceptible to those who have experienced this increase in spiritual energy, and so a student might be invited to receive the Initiation of Illumination to seal the radiant light into their being. Recognizing that these terms and ways of describing the growing light of an unfolding soul might be unfamiliar to some, we might look toward the sacred art of all times and religions to see the shining halo and aura that surrounds holy people. Religious icons in Christianity almost always have the visible expressions of the spiritual energy body of Jesus, Mary, Saints, and angels in the form of shining halos and auras. When one's spiritual sight is awakened, one is able to see this light with their inner vision, and sometimes with their physical vision.

The Initiation of Illumination is proffered upon the student through the laying on of hands. Generally, two priests are present for this initiation, one standing behind the kneeling student with their palms covering the crown of the student's head. The other priest or bishop places their hands over the front and back of the solar plexus [chakra at the height of the

stomach]. Both priests pour light through their hands into the physical, energetic/etheric, and spiritual bodies of the student while watching for the movement of energy from the base of the spine [root chakra] toward the heart. The Illumination is initiated with this movement of energy and then continued through the crown of the student and into the heaven worlds and the heart of God.

The priests *witness* aloud that the student's body is *full of light*, and then use the *Word of Power* to seal the Light into the student's body, mind, heart, and aura. This mystical and alchemical initiation is the beginning of the student growing the light in intensity and radiance in order to bless the world with the Light of Christ. The Illumination can be likened to Jesus' *Transfiguration* on Mount Tabor when His body was filled with such intense Light that those disciples present fell to their knees in awe and wonder.

When the light body is fully engaged, the student continues to experience transformation and clarification, as well as an enhanced spiritual relationship with the Divine. The Light Body acts as a *vesica piscis* or doorway between the world of matter and the world of spirit, as seen in many of the icons of Jesus' transfiguration and resurrection. This *robe of the spirit* is readily seen by others whose spiritual sight is open, and sometimes by other people of pure spirit as Jesus promised in the Beatitudes when he said, '*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*' (Matthew 5:8)

After acclimating to the increased light from the Initiation of Illumination, students often feel a desire in their hearts or a call in their souls to serve the Christ and the Light. This call or desire generally grows from the gratitude of having been *saved* from the suffering of the worldly way of living. Once the spirit is set free and the heart is restored to its rightful relationship as beloved of God, a soul generally wants to share the *good news* of the *Way of Christ* with others.

They can do so by being kinder and gentler in the world, by being a loving and generous member of their family and spiritual community, and by seeking the official role of *minister*. The first level of ministry in my tradition is that of deacon. A deacon, as mentioned in Chapter 3, cares for the physical sanctuary of the chapel and the sanctuary of the heart in congregants. A dedicated deacon is gentle, kind, welcoming, and inclusionary. They care for the people and the chapel with prayerful devotion and exquisite attention. The consciousness of the deacon permeates the atmosphere of the chapel, helping to make it a numinous space where the Spirit is easily felt by congregants. Deacons are also those who welcome and assist congregants into the sanctuary, gently reminding them of the practices such as removing shoes, turning off electronics, and holding sacred the mindful silence and stillness of the chapel space.

The continued spiritual growth of deacons may lead to the higher Initiations and Ordinations of Self-Realization, Priesthood, God-Realization, and the Mastery and Bishopric. The sacraments, initiations, and ordinations are the spiritual stepping-stones to deeper and deeper union with the Divine. The rituals of these all rely on conscious, light-filled priests and bishops who create an energetic, liminal threshold or portal between the material and spiritual worlds. In these thin places and times, the transfer of heavenly energy, light, and love raises the consciousness of the recipient in ways that are alchemical, ethereal, and ineffable. And so goes the passing along of the *Way* by which one's consciousness is raised into *Christ Consciousness*, and *Non-dual Consciousness*. These are the levels of consciousness spoken by St. Paul when he said, '*Let that mind be in you that is in Christ Jesus.*' (Philippians 2:15).

The *Gifts of the Spirit* are visited upon those who vow themselves to the service of God and people. According to the book of Isaiah, they are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude [courage, strength], knowledge, piety [devotion] and fear [awe] of the Lord (Isaiah

11:1-2). Thomas Aquinas wrote that the four Gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge and counsel direct the intellect, while the other three (fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord) direct the will toward God. (Summa Theologica, 346 AD). Aquinas asserts that there is a correspondence between the Seven Virtues and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, as follows:

- The gift of wisdom corresponds to the virtue of charity.
- The gifts of understanding and knowledge correspond to the virtue of faith.
- The gift of counsel (right judgement) corresponds to the virtue of prudence.
- The gift of fortitude corresponds to the virtue of courage.
- The gift of fear of the Lord corresponds to the virtue of hope.
- The gift of reverence [piety] corresponds to the virtue of justice.
- *To the virtue of temperance, no gift is directly assigned, but the gift of fear/awe can be taken as such, since fear drives one to restrict oneself from forbidden temptations.*

(Summa Theologica, 346 AD).

St. Augustine (397) drew a connection between the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the *Beatitudes* (Matthew 5:3-12).

- *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*, reflects Fear of the Lord as the *poor in spirit* are the humble and God-fearing.
- *Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted*, corresponds to the Gift of Knowledge, as for Augustine the knowledge of God brings both an increased awareness of personal sin, and to some extent grieving at the abandonment of practices and activities that separate one from God.
- *Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land*, relates to Piety.

- *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied*, pertains to Fortitude.
- *Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy* demonstrates the Gift of Counsel.
- *Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God*, the Gift of Understanding.
- *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God*, Wisdom.
- *Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.

(397, The Four Books of St. Augustine on Christian Doctrine)

In 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, St. Paul gives an account of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit:

*To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.*

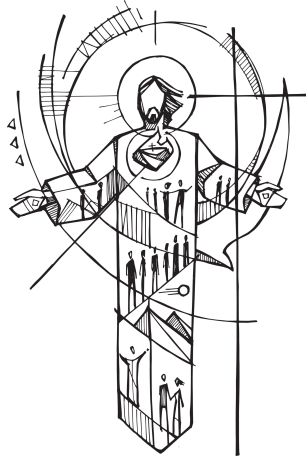
Here we see the theological explanations and descriptions of the Gifts of the Spirit. In my experience as a modern contemplative and mystic, the vowed servant of the Christ receives these gifts as they are needed to attend to the circumstances that arise, and the people that arrive, in front of them. In this way, Jesus' servants can be *all things to all people* as St. Paul describes himself in the role of servant '*so that by all possible means*' he might save some (1Corinthians 9:22). As these gifts move through the followers of Christ, they become His *hands and feet* in the Earth. Those devoted to the Christ are meted out the means through which to bless, teach, and transform all people they encounter, according to the movement of the Holy Spirit. This is why I focus so heavily in training ministers to be *exquisitely obedient to the moment* (Drake,

2022). The vow of obedience is one of the priest and bishop vows; obedience to the Spirit of God within. (See Appendix 1 for Priest and Bishop Ordinations and vows.)

Ministers of the Christ do all these things for the Glory of God and the upliftment of humankind, following in the footsteps of our Beloved Jesus and Mary. By Their love and merciful grace, we become instruments of grace for those we serve in and out of the chapel. This is the heart-prayer and vow of the ministers of the Christ. We give all to serve all.

*How, then, does the servant serve?  
By being only the presence of Love.  
The extension of Love,  
Untainted by the thought of a doer,  
Is the quality of genuine service,  
A reflection in this world  
Of the Love which begets eternally  
The holy and only begotten child of God.*

*Jeshua Ben Joseph  
The Way of the Servant, 2019*



**Conscious Evolution on the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path:  
A Spiritual Technology for the Golden Age**

**Chapter 6**

**How the Mystics Save the World**



## Chapter 6

### How the Mystics Save the World

*‘A religion without mystics is a philosophy.’  
~Pope Francis*

Mysticism is a lived tradition of the spirit for me. It is the real experience of relating with God personally, deeply and transcendently. Rather than a religious doctrine, it calls us to be the saviors of the world, like Jesus was and is through the practices of the mystic that increase the human energetic signature with the high vibrations of the Spirit. Not only does this allow for the diminishment of egoic strivings that many in the world are chasing, it also brings peace, harmony and love into their lives and the lives of those who interact with them. As this peace spreads, others are uplifted in vibration and go on to ripple out the saving grace of love, compassion and grace. The *actions* of the mystics are seen in both the spiritual and material worlds. Many Christian mystics give themselves to teaching, healing, and helping those in need, as Jesus did. In addition, they intercede for humankind through the spiritual arts of prayer and the energetic transformation of people, places and things through blessings through the sacraments, ordinations and initiations.

In addition to the theological *Gifts of the Spirit* mentioned in Chapter 4, many have experienced other spiritual gifts across the course of their lives and travels. These are meted out in God’s timing and through God’s grace, many times with no formal training. I offer my own experience of such things here, in more or less chronological order of my having received them. These I offer so that the reader might be validated and supported in any of such gifts that they have received, remembering that these gifts are meant to be given away, as *‘To whom much is given, much will be required.’* (Luke 12:48)

## **Crosswalker for the Lost Souls of the Deceased**

Since I was a child, I have seen dead people (Drake, 2022). At first these experiences were frightening and disturbing. By the time I got to college, I was doing my best to refute them and drink myself into a less conscious state in which I would not have to see, feel, or hear them. When I started my spiritual training as a Christian Mystic in earnest, my bishop helped me to understand the veracity of these visitations. I began to see that this was a Gift of the Spirit and as such I was meant to serve these souls. I began by speaking with them, consoling and comforting them, and usually introducing them to Jesus and allowing Him to take them across to the heaven world. This is how I came to see myself as a *crosswalker* for the lost souls of the deceased.

During the early years, I did not seek out souls, rather noticed them as they sought me out. Eventually, I realized that I could call out to the lost soul of a deceased person (sometimes the soul of someone I knew personally, other times upon request of another living person). I began to communicate with souls more regularly and offer to help them find their way to Jesus.

These experiences increased in intensity and frequency over the years (Drake, 2022). At this point, I commune in spirit with lost souls whenever they draw near and sometimes go after them on behalf of a grieving person. Each situation, like each soul, unfolds differently. Sometimes the souls are happily crossing over and just want to greet me or give me a message for their living loved ones. Sometimes the souls do not want to talk to me even when I tell them that their friend or loved one sent me to help. Sometimes the soul has some karmic thing they need to work out before they can move along to the heaven world [and thus they wait in a purgatory state that I call the land of lost souls] and so I help them with counsel, intercessory prayer, blessings, and guidance.

In one case, a dear friend passed and her spirit came rushing into my bedroom while I was sleeping. The air moved as if a wind had come in through a window, though the windows were closed. I was pleased to see and feel her as she had been in hospice care suffering from cancer. In her visitation, it was clear that she was set free from her suffering. I asked if she wanted me to call Jesus to walk her across to God. She emphatically said, 'No! I want you to walk me over!' And so I did. We joined together with Jesus, who I introduced as my friend. The three of us walked into the Light, the Source of Life, and only I returned, finding myself in my bed once again, joyful to have been a helper to her soul.

I do not know why I have had this particular gift much of my life. I do know that when I am able to comfort and guide lost souls, I feel a bliss that floods my entire being. God has asked me to be a helper of souls and I am most grateful and joyful to do so. It is also a joy to report back to grieving people that their loved one has crossed over to God and will soon return reconciled and at peace. This celestial good news has brought comfort and peace to many people with whom I have shared these experiences. And, of course, many, many people have their own experiences of visitations from their beloved deceased people both in waking and in sleeping.

### **Discerning God's Guidance - Following God's Will**

In my contemplative and mystical training, I was taught to cultivate an internal dialogue with the Divine through meditation, prayer, contemplation, dreamwork, and the discernment of signs and wonders. In the beginning of these practices, I sometimes had visions of celestial beings that brought solace to my soul and egged me on to the deep work of surrendering my will to God so that the gifts I received would be for God's purposes only. I dedicated myself to the disciplines, devotions, and practices I was taught. With diligence the sporadic contact and signs eventually turned into an ongoing conversation with God in which I could turn my attention

inward and *discuss* whatever was happening, in order to receive God's sight, wisdom, and guidance as to how to proceed. This conversational relationship with God is reflected in the writings of many mystics and saints, including St. Alphonsus Liguori who is quoted as saying, *'Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends. Speak to Him often of your business, your plans, your troubles, your fears – of everything that concerns you. Converse with Him confidently and frankly; for God is not wont to speak to a soul that does not speak to Him.'*

The tricky thing is that sometimes God puts us in a *waiting room* until the timing is right for us to see and know what our next steps are. I'm not a particularly patient person by nature, having been born under the sign of Aries, but I have come to see that waiting is required while God moves heaven and earth to get me to the right person and the right place at the right time. Now I am mostly curious about how that process will unfold. Service to God means receiving information on a *need-to-know basis*. Once our wills are surrendered to God's Will in us, we can learn to be exquisitely obedient to the moment and the movement of the Holy Spirit by continually being tuned into the energies in and around our being. In this state of awareness and expectancy, we will see what the next right thing is to do or say. In this way, God can use us as instruments for God's purposes, but we must accept that *'God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.'* (Romans 12: 1-2).

Sometimes I hear people assume that giving one's will over to a *god* is an act of blind faith, or a thoughtless act of following a myth or story about the nature of consciousness and the universe. This especially comes from scientific materialists who believe only in what they can see or prove by particular intellectual theories and tests. To these I would say that my faith has been well tested and studied. I come from a long line of mystics, seers, and lovers of the Light,

all of whom have or have had the same wondrous experiences of visions, visitations, prophetic dreams, and miraculous wonders surrounding and guiding their lives. Those of us who live in the reality that includes both the material and spiritual worlds, know from experience the veracity and consistency of such things...even as we know we cannot *prove* these things to others who have not experienced them. No matter...we go along our way, moving from hope to faith to belief to deep knowing...a certainty drawn from much experience and experimentation with the promises of God. I know for certain that God blesses and guides me daily. More even than that, I know for certain that I am a beloved creature of matter and spirit; earth and heaven, and in knowing this, I can serve as a bridge for others who wish to know such things. This is the life of a mystic and a minister, guided by love and blessed by grace. To this I say, 'Halleluliah, Jesus!'

### **Communing in the Spirit with Nature**

In 2019 I was walking along a country road in Ireland, taking in the pastoral views of sheep in the fields and birds in the bushes. It was a sunny day, and I was enjoying the beauty of nature and the wonder of being alive. Gently, a voice and a vibration came from me and over me saying, "I am a creature of the Earth." Of course, I knew this in a material way, but in that moment, I had the felt experience of being one with all of creation...not an observer but a participant; not separate from the sheep, the birds, the grass and shrubs and sky...but rather a piece of existence, aware of itself as both participant and conscious observer.

This simple experience reconnected me to the reality of my being both spirit and matter...both being sacred and holy. It became clear to me that the two are essential to this incarnate experience. What joy flowed through my being at this simple realization! This was

not a mental experience, nor simply the acceptance of being a biological being, it was a revelation and expansion of my conscious awareness of myself both as an expression of God and a part of God's expression in form. And what a form the Irish countryside displays...peaceful and pleasant, a rarified energy that allows the spirit to rest from the ways of the world mind. I experienced such sweet relief and realization that the moment is etched upon my heart and soul and mind as a profound moment of understanding my place in this wonder we call life.

Having grown up in the woods of New Hampshire on a farm, I had plenty of connecting and peaceful experiences as a child to draw from. The ways of the world separated me from that close connection in early adulthood as I sought to reach for the goals I was told were imperative for *success* in life...education, work, relationships, homes and cars and...and...and... Of course, no lasting satisfaction came from many of these accomplishments and acquisitions, and so I began again in my late 20's to seek a deeper and more soul-satisfying truth. First, I attuned myself to my own being through meditation and yoga. Then I began to rekindle my earlier studies of the mystical traditions and spent many years with many teachers coming back into my own authentic being (Drake, 2022).

After the epiphany in the Irish countryside, I began to have experiences of communing and communicating with trees, rivers, stones, mountains, and wind. I began to visit ancient sites in the Irish countryside and had visions of ancient times. I befriended the Hazelwood forest that was near my little cottage and was welcomed by the Spirit of the Forest in a months and years-long relationship that continues to this day. These relationships are as real and deep as any human relationship I have had. The forest beings and elementals told me their stories and taught me much about the separation of human consciousness from the consciousness of the elemental

world. This homecoming was both sweet and awesome. I had no guidebook; only my experience and innocence, and my willingness to be exquisitely obedient to the moment.

Over many years of having these experiences over and over again, I can say that I am richer for the friendship of nature spirits. I have dedicated myself to transforming the energies of the world mind that seek to consume, monetize, and destroy what humans call *natural resources*. It is no secret in today's world that humans are destroying this beautiful planet and driving to extinction many of its magnificent expressions of life. Befriending the spirit of nature makes our soul friends with all of creation. When we are soul friends with creation...*Anam Cara*, as the Irish call it...we will do everything in our power to protect, heal, preserve, and honor all of the wonders of the natural world. This is the promise I have made to creation; to be a good steward, a fierce protector, and a healer of the wounding between humans and creation. These experiences and promises can also be seen in the writings of saints like St. Hildegard von Bingen, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Anthony of Padua, to name a few.

### **Earthworks-Reparation, Reconciliation, Reconnection**

Not long after my epiphany in the Irish countryside, I began in earnest in the Hazelwood to offer reparation, reconciliation, and reconnection through the use of ritual offerings, prayer, song, dance, and light work. After a fashion, I came to call these rituals *earthworks*. I have been called and guided to do these works in many different places from the Hazelwood of Ireland to Hawaii's Mauna Kea mountain, to the beaches of Normandy, France, to churches and cathedrals like Chartres, Sacre-Coeur, and Rosslyn Chapel, to graveyards and forest paths. Some of the work is to release souls as noted earlier in this chapter. Some of the work is to acknowledge with respect and become acquainted with the elementals in different natural places and spaces, to earn their trust and to repair some of the trust lost between humankind and the natural world. Some

of the work is witnessing what humans have done and continue to do; to let my heart break for the things that break the heart of Jesus, of God; to weep and moan in despair and grief over the atrocities of humans. In this way, my tears of grief and contrition for the acts of humanity help to ease the karma of the collective.

When the grieving, repairing, and reconciling is sufficient for trust to be restored between the natural world and at least this one human, I clear the energies and make a portal through which a pillar of Light from the heart of God comes into and through the material world and into the heart of the Mother Earth. This reconnection restores *heaven in earth*, the powerful and beautiful union and dance of spirit and matter. Both Mother and Father are honored and loved in this way, and both express their love and gratitude to me for my efforts. We humans can be the bridge for this reconciliation and restoration of conscious humanity in right relationship with both of these essential parts of our being as humans...the spirit of earth and the spirit of heaven.

As my fellow ministers will attest, there is no stopping me when Spirit and Nature call upon me to perform these rituals, rites, and alchemical restorations. My eternal yes to the movement of the Spirit has had me climbing over fences, stonewalls, and cordoned-off areas of cathedrals; lying prostrate on stone floors, boulders, and woodland floors; spontaneously singing from the heart in churches, cemeteries, and mountain tops. I'm a fool for God and a fool for Love, and so I do everything I can, wherever I am, with whatever I have, to offer myself as a reconciler. The word reconciliation means *to become friends again*. That is my aim and my passion...to help reconcile souls to themselves, to God, to one another, and to our precious and wondrous earth. I call these things earthworks - *work* because they are a heavy lift for the heart and soul, bearing the burdens of sorrow, grief, destruction, and defilement. I often say that earthworks *take a bite out of my heart* and sometimes require some convalescing and integrating



of the experiences. Nonetheless, I have vowed myself as one of God's servants to do whatever God puts in front of me to be a helper to all of creation. And so I rest awhile and then return rejuvenated for the next earthworks mission.

### **Intercessory Prayer**

Intercessory Prayer has long been a tool used by humankind to offer graces through prayer for those who sin, suffer, and do not know how to pray for themselves. This is a longstanding practice in the Catholic tradition with prayers like the Rosary, the St. Gertrude the Great Prayer, and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy (Appendix B).

A faithful person can use the fervent desire of their hearts for the alleviation of suffering to fuel magnified prayers for the intercession of divine beings and heavenly graces. We seek divine intervention on behalf of those people, places, and situations that we know are suffering. We can even offer up these prayers for the suffering of the world that is unknown to us. Because we are creative beings and co-creating '*the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible*' (Eisenstein, 2013), we leverage our faith and devotion in intercessory prayer.

The practice, or spiritual technology, of intercessory prayer is magnified by fasting and by our willingness to pray even in times when we have our own troubles, pains, or illnesses. We can '*lay down our lives for our friends*' (John 15:13) by self-forgetting supplication to the Divine on behalf of others. The power of these prayers, and their results, are often felt and seen in the energetic and vision realm of the Spirit. In the prayer of St. Gertrude the Great, for example, Jesus promised to release 1000 souls from purgatory every time it is prayed. How might we know that this promise is being fulfilled by Jesus? By experimenting with a novena [9 days of prayer] or a full 40 days of dedication and devotion to the Saint and Her prayer. In my experience of intercessory prayer, I see the souls of the deceased being released from purgatory

[that land of lost souls which I spoke of earlier] and feel the burdens of sin [karma for errors and misgivings] rise off of the souls of the living. I feel the lightness that is restored to them, the grace of being free from karma in that moment...a moment in which a soul might choose to reach toward the Divine with gratitude and supplication for help and healing.

Some nuns have dedicated themselves to Intercessory Prayer by becoming an  *anchoress*  or a  *cloistered*  nun. This means they dedicate their lives to prayer and do not engage in or indulge in the activities and pleasantries of the world. Instead, they give up their earthly life in order to use themselves up in supplication to the heavens for continual blessings and graces to come upon humankind and the planet. In the middle ages, the life of an anchoress was so extreme and all-consuming in its dedication that these nuns were built into a stone room with no doors, only openings to receive communion from the sanctuary and sustenance from the congregation. Their every thought and deed  *was*  to pray for the world. I'm sure I have lived a cloistered life in other lifetimes as I am strongly drawn to it. Unless or until I am called back to that life, I teach as many faithful people as I can about the power of intercessory prayer.

### **Many Paths, One Destination**

Although I am a Christian mystic, through and through, I have come along a winding path that included many other traditions; indigenous, spiritual, and religious. I love Trevor Hall's song, "Many Roads" for that reason. The lyrics go like this...'*there's many roads and many paths that lead to You. Some say they're false, but I believe all of them are true. Yes, all of them are true. The green earth and the sky blue.*' (Hall, 2009).

There is wisdom to be had in all  *wisdom traditions*  and  *wisdom literature*  across time. There are many  *wisdom keepers* , both living and deceased, who have given humans guidance and instruction on the  *Way* . I have been called to follow the  *Way of Christ* . This  *Way*  does not

diminish the veracity, importance, or sacredness of other *ways*. I have walked on many ways for varying periods of time and found them to be useful to my journey. That's not to say that everyone needs to do that to move toward the destination of union with God. The God of my understanding, my knowing, will place before us whatever teachings and tools will lead us in the direction of hope, healing, and holism [holiness]. The winding journey is both enjoyable and enlightening and allows us to share with one another the many unique recipes for spiritual *success* that are available to us. How gracious God is to bless us with the many wondrous ways of the Spirit.

All of that being said, I *know* that I am a Christian mystic. My soul knows its mission as a Christian mystic and priest. I am in direct communion and conversation with the heaven world and my Teachers, Jesus Christ and Mother Mary, and with the Communion of Saints and Angels, many of whom I have experienced personally in visions, visitations, dreams, and contemplations. This knowing holds me firmly to the *Way of the Christ* and I identify myself as a Christian Mystic. My body displays my fealty to Jesus and Mary with tattoos of Their Sacred Hearts over my own heart; the Virgin of Guadalupe on one arm and the Cross of St. Joan of Arc on the other; the scripture '*Act justly. Walk Humbly. Love Mercy.*' (Micah 6:8) on my forearm. I am fully confirmed and converted, and happily so, to the *Way of the Christ*. It is my hope and prayer that each person find their *Way* and dive deeply and fully into it; spending their lives dedicated and devoted to the depths and mysteries of that *Way*. In today's world, I often see folks digging many shallow wells in their seeking for truth. It is my suggestion and recommendation to give yourself fully and without reservation; to surrender yourself to the *Way* you have chosen so you may receive and reflect the wonders of that *Way* to a suffering world and thereby be a helper in uplifting humankind.

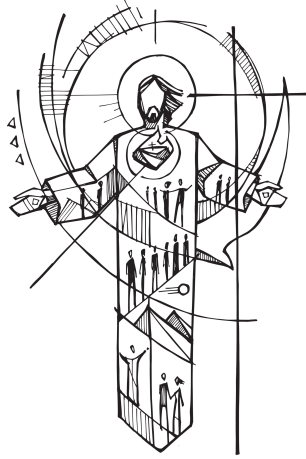
## The Tarot World Card

Last year [2023], I taught a 24-week course on the book *Meditations on The Tarot of Marseilles: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* (Anonymous, attributed to Valentin Tomberg, 2002, course soon to be available on madevi.org). The tarot was said by some esotericists to be created as a hidden and symbolic representation of the alchemical process of transcendence. The final major arcana in the tarot is the *World* card. This card is the *magnum opus* of the alchemical, transcendent process in which the devoted servant has been transformed into one who walks between the worlds, victorious over suffering and death.

This version of the tarot is particularly powerful and of high vibrational quality (Hawkins, 2020). In leading the participants through this 24-week process, much growth and deepening occurred, including the rededication to the mystical ministerial vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. The image of this card (below) shows an androgynous being in a vesica piscis wreath, wielding the wands of manifestation, surrounded by the images that represent the four Gospels [Matthew, Mark, Luke and John] or the four Angels, elements, and Hebrew Letters symbolizing the unspeakable Name of God [YHVH]. It represents victory over death and mastery of the Spirit, an ascension of sorts. It represents the ultimate liberation of the incarnate spirit from the illusions of the manifest human world-mind.



I include the *World* card in this chapter on *How the Mystics Save the World* to illustrate and emphasize that the individual transformation from human being to transcendent being, or *new human*, or *resurrected human*, or *conscious human*, is the *Way* that our world will be saved (Keizer, 2020). The Second Coming of Christ is often described as the time when the christed civilization will be established on the earth in each and every human (Wilber, 2017; Marion, 2000; Yogananda, 2007). This is the motivation for all ministers and lovers of the light...to transform and then take their part in helping others to transform, thereby creating that *more beautiful world our hearts know is possible*. The *Way* of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path is one *Way* to fulfill this aim.



## **Chapter 7: On the *Way of the Christ***

## Chapter 7: On the *Way of the Christ*

*'Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends.'*

~St. Alphonsus Ligouri

This treatise is my attempt to delineate, substantiate, and validate, the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path as an effective and efficient means of raising consciousness on the individual and collective level. I feel this is important work as the world we live in continues to secularize and turn away from the esoteric and wisdom teachings of Christianity as well as other religious and spiritual traditions across time and cultures. Given the work of David Hawkins and others (Gladwell, 2002, Chopra, 2016; Keyes, 1984), it is clear that there is a *tipping point* at which the whole of humanity will turn the corner into an awareness of the nature and evolution of humankind.

As in all other aspects of evolution, the evolution of consciousness is an organic and pragmatic process. Given the current state of the earth and humanity, it seems we will either need to evolve toward loving-kindness or we will perish. I believe we will survive and move toward a compassionate human race that cares for others, for all of creation, and for the planet Herself, our Mother Earth. It is my hope, my prayer, and my mission to do my part in manifesting this *more beautiful world*.

The *Way of the Christ* is one way for humans to purposefully, and methodically, engage in this process; this current wave of conscious evolution. The *Way of the Christ* is the way of compassion, forgiveness, mercy, and grace; with its *Great Commandments* to *'Love, God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself.'* (Mark 12:30-31). The Mystical Christian Initiatory Path leads one into deeper relationship with God through the healing of the heart, identification with the soul, and

transformation of the mind. We come to have ‘*that mind in us that is in Christ Jesus*’ (Philippians 2:5-11) through the practices, disciplines, sacraments, and initiations which aid in our transformation through divine intervention.

Much of Christianity relies on beliefs and doctrines. The Christian Mystic relies on the experience of the Presence of God and the Grace of Jesus and Mary. With dedicated prayer, meditation, and desire, we come to *know* rather than to believe. When one experiences the liminal and the numinous, the signs and wonders, the visions and visitations, there is only certainty in the reality and interface of the spiritual and material worlds. In this knowing, all fear ceases. We come to recognize ourselves as god-beings created by, of and for Love...that majestic attribute of the Godhead that is our Creative Source. Jesus said, ‘*Know you not that you are gods?*’ (John 10:34). In following the *Way of the Christ* we are restored to this knowing.

In this revelation, we are healed and made whole; made new and restored to our eternal divine nature. In this God-Realization, we become co-creators of that more beautiful world our hearts know is possible, thereby restoring Heaven to Earth. We share the blessings and bounties of divine love with everyone that we meet and every cause that we espouse. Jesus came to radically shift the consciousness of humankind toward love...unconditional and eternal love. Those who follow the esoteric teachings of Jesus and the path of transformation come to do as He did...to love unconditionally and eternally. For me, this is the *Way of the Christ*.

Given the hopeful prophecies of all wisdom teachings, the day is coming when this shift of evolution, or ascension of consciousness, will come to pass. In the meantime, the modern mystic can step upon the *Way of the Christ* and progress in conscious evolution beyond the mind of the world, through the *dark night of the soul* and into the Christ Consciousness and God Consciousness [nondual consciousness] that is available to all serious and dedicated students and



seekers. The spiritual technology of the Mystical Christian Initiatory Path is one way to usher in the Golden Age promised by Jesus – an epoch of peace and love on the earth.

I have followed the *Way of the Christ* and found it to be the *Truth and the Life* that Jesus promised. I have led many people along this *Way* and have dedicated my life to continuing to do so. I will continue to raise up other ministers who are dedicated to this particular *Way*. I am kind and loving toward all, evenwhile *I must be about my Father's work...* which means I have a singleness of purpose to love and work tirelessly to create that more beautiful world our hearts know is possible for all; that *Golden Age*, that *Heaven on Earth* promised by my Teachers and Way-Showers, Jesus Christ and Mother Mary. As a vowed servant of the Christ, it is my life's mission and joy to follow the *Way of the Christ*. May this dissertation and the sacramental manual that accompanies it, make the *Way* more clear and accessible to any who choose to embark upon it. Amen.

*'My faith demands – this is not optional – my faith demands that I do whatever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference.'*

*~Former President Jimmy Carter*

## **Glossary of Esoteric Terms**

- Absolution – formal release from guilt, obligation or punishment*
- Acolyte – a person assisting the celebrant in a religious service or procession*
- Adept – a person who is skilled or proficient at something*
- Apostolic Succession – ordination in direct lineage of the Apostles of Jesus Christ*
- Baptism – the religious rite or Sacrament using water as a symbol of purification or regeneration and admission to the Christian church*
- Bishop – a senior member of the Christian clergy, usually in charge of a territory [diocese] and empowered to confer holy orders*
- Bodhisattva – a Buddhist term for a soul who vows to incarnate as a servant of humankind to alleviate suffering and raise consciousness*
- Christian – a follow of Jesus the Christ*
- Conscious – awake aware of and responding to one's surroundings*
- Consciousness – the fact of awareness of the self and the world*
- Darshan – a blessing brought forth by seeing a holy person or image of a deity*
- Deacon – a first level consecrated minister*
- Esoteric – meaning 'inner'; the idea that everything has an inner side and we can come to know something of it*
- Evolution – the gradual development of something*
- Gnosis – direct knowledge of spiritual or esoteric mysteries*
- Gnosticism – a prominent movement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Christian church, considered heretical at the time, that teaches the possibility of direct knowledge of spiritual or esoteric mysteries*
- Holy Order – a group of deacons, priests and bishops set apart for ministry*
- Holy orders – the Sacrament of ordination of deacons, priests and bishops*
- Initiation – a starting point, a ritual that admits someone into a new level of training or understanding*
- Liminal – occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold*
- Magisterial authority – religious authority of a group of leaders over lower levels of authority*
- Master Teacher – one initiated into the deep, gnostic rite of God Realization*
- Mysticism – belief that union with or absorption into the Deity or the absolute, or the spiritual apprehension of knowledge inaccessible to the intellect, may be attained through contemplation and self-surrender*
- Novice – one who is new to an endeavor or way of life*
- Numinous – having a strong religious or spiritual quality, indicating or suggesting the presence of a divinity*
- Ordination – the act of conferring Holy Orders onto a minister*
- Priest – an ordained minister of the Catholic, Orthodox or Anglican Church having the authority to perform certain rites and administer certain sacraments*
- Ritual – a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order*
- Sacrament – a religious ceremony or ritual regarded as imparting a divine grace, 7 Sacraments include: Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Confession, Holy Orders, Last Rites, Holy Matrimony*
- Sacred Geometry – the study of or belief in the symbolic and sacred meaning to certain*

*geometric shapes and proportions associated with the belief of a divine creator of the universal geometer*

Sadhana, Sangha, Satsang, Seva – *Daily Practice, Community, Teachings, Service – four precepts of the Hindu Traditional Life*

Theurgy – *divine magic*

Transcendence – *existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level*

Transubstantiation – *the conversion of the substance of the Eucharist elements into the body and blood of Christ at consecration, only the appearance of bread and wine still remaining*

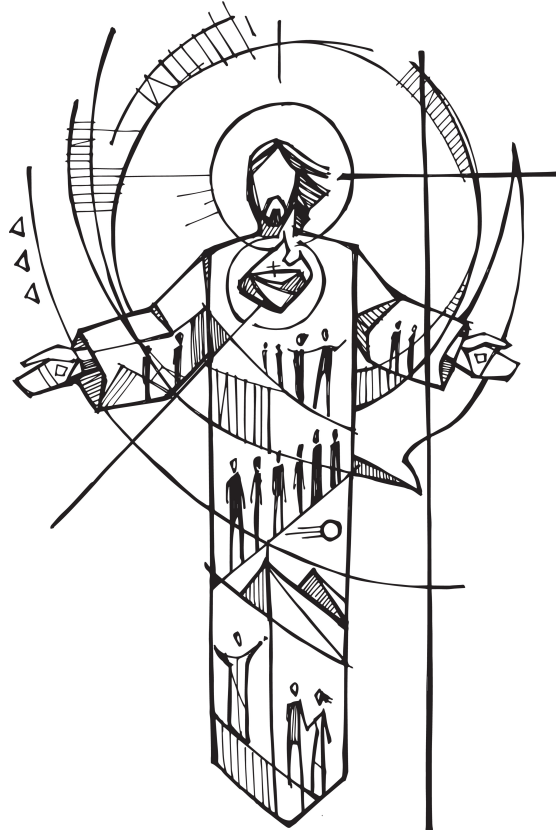
The Way of the Christ – *a term used to describe one who follows Jesus's teachings, commandments and example*

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### The Alpha and the Omega

It all boils down to this  
 We came here to awaken  
 We came here to create  
 We came here to love

When all is said and done  
 Life is distilled into the Chrism  
 That elixir that is fire  
 That fire that burns away the dross

And we are left naked and holy  
 Resting pristinely in our nature  
 Shining like the life-giving sun  
 Remembering ourselves as Love

Ma Devi, the Right Reverend Mary Francis Drake  
 January 15, 2024