



Deepening Circle

Prayer and Reflection Guide

Fall, 2024

Yield of Dreams by Carolyn McDade

*As earth bows in evening
and opens to the night
we wander in the swing of stars
beyond the bend of time*

*Oh Living Flame, O Yield of Dreams
who called us home
O Ancient Ones without, within
we turn to you, return to you, return*

*You are the love within all things
a widening embrace
a flame who weeps and launches joy
to leap through realms of grace*

*Are we not born to love this life
to make the wounded whole
to plunge the chasm of despair
and lift the singing bird?*

*O Ardent One, be with us go with us
as we dare to make of love a greater
love and pass the living flame*

*You are the love within all things a
widening embrace,
widening, widening
are we not born to love this life?
Are we not born to love?*

*Are we not born to love this life to
make the wounded whole to plunge
the chasm of despair, of despair?*

*in the chasm, from the narrows
comes the singing bird comes rising
claiming freedom, freedom singing
in the wide embrace sings the rising
bird.*

Are we not born to love?

What is the task of the afternoon—the afternoon of individual human lives, the afternoon of human history, the afternoon of Christianity, the afternoon of the history of faith?

The experience of the mystics tell us that it is a transition from egocentrism, from the self-centeredness of the "little self" to a new identity, to a deeper, yet also broader, "new self." This transformation—the shift of emphasis from the ego to the deep self—is often expressed as a journey to the depths, a journey inward.

To the extent to which we bring the center of gravity of our lives to that inner center, we encounter God, all our relationships and all creation in a new and fuller way. God as the depth of reality is "God in all things."

By this shift from the "little self" to the more fundamental and essential self (we can call it "God in us" or "Christ in us"), the human being fulfills the meaning of life, attaining maturity and completeness. We become integrated and whole in body, heart, mind, and we become a healing presence in all our relationships.

The afternoon of life requires the energy of love; love as a passionate desire for union. "Love alone," wrote Teilhard de Chardin "is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them, for Love alone takes them and joins them to what is deepest in themselves."

adapted from THOMAS HALIK, *The Afternoon of Christianity*

I am never more myself than when I give myself away in love for my neighbor.
The human person comes to be through reaching out in love for the Other.

Meditation is not a time for thinking; it is a time for simple awareness. Simple wordless awareness of the present. We meditate without any expectation that we will get better at it or that we will become more enlightened people--and sometimes meditation becomes boring and dry. Then the best thing might be to stay with a single scripture passage turning it over and over during the day.

At every minute we exist on the edge of the unlimited, the absolute, the transcendent. Meditation allows a moment to abide in that threshold of the unbounded One, that great mystery of Love,
Paul Quenon, OCSO

For Reflection and Practice:

Take little mini-breaks of silence during the day. Abide in the inner stillness of your Deep Self, Christ-in-you, and simply BE.

Behold the presence of LOVE often each day and especially in relationships, in the space between you and any other, human or otherwise. Reach out!

