

“Every Thing is Sacred” — 50-02  
PAUSE TO CONSIDER: REFLECTIONS ON SESSION #2



1. Happy Tuesday to you! Enjoy viewing to this excellent video:
  - Contemplation Practice: 1:13 - 3:33
  - 12:00 - 13:34 Patrick Boland talks about his new baby in light of the Universal Christ.
  - 14:00 Reflection #40 is read to you by Richard and Patrick
  - 16:50-25:05 The Tricycle metaphor
  - 31:40 Reflection #6 is read to you — Rohr answers the questions.

2. Joan's opening: "The Second Journey," September 19, 2022

Father Richard describes the conscious attention and intention necessary to "fall upward" into a purposeful second half of life:

Most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely about getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of our physical life, but I simply don't believe that's all there is to it. What looks like falling can largely be experienced as falling upward and onward, into a broader and deeper world, where the soul finds its fullness, is finally connected to the whole, and lives inside the Big Picture.

It is not a loss but somehow a gain, not losing but actually winning. We probably have to have met at least one true elder to imagine this could be true. I've met enough radiant

people to know that it is possible. They have come to their human fullness, often against all odds, usually by suffering personally or vicariously and empathetically. As Jesus describes such a person, “from their breasts flow fountains of living water” (John 7:38). They are models and goals for our humanity, much more than the celebrities and politicians whose actions we seem to care so much about today.

Remember, no one can keep us from the second half of our own lives except ourselves. Nothing can inhibit our second journey except our own lack of courage, patience, and imagination. Our second journey is all ours to walk or to avoid. My conviction is that some falling apart of the first journey is necessary for this to happen, so don’t waste too many moments lamenting poor parenting, lost jobs, failed relationships, physical challenges, economic poverty, or other tragedies. Pain is part of the deal. If we don’t walk into the second half of our own life, it is surely because we do not want it. Let’s desire, desire deeply, desire ourselves, desire God, desire everything good, true, and beautiful. All of the emptying out is for the sake of a Great Outpouring

### 3. Housekeeping with Brenda

- a. Family Day Monday Night Book Study:
- b. Invitation to visit the sanctuary at St. David’s between 10 and 1 on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023 for a quiet time.
- c. Pan cakes after church on Feb. 26, 2023.
- d. Lunch with Rev. Eva at 11 a.m., Cora’s in Brentwood. Note: Pastoral Care Zoom gathering will go as usual between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.
- e. Early morning Lenten Meditation begins on Feb. 23, Thursday morning at 8:30 on Zoom with Thursday morning Bible Study meeting at 10. Watch for your invitation.
- f. St. David’s Council needs a chairperson for the Affirming Ministry. Call Colin or the office if you would like to participate in this very valuable ministry.

4. About Fr. Richard Rohr: In response to his health issues. He gives a brief update on the video (#1 above) of his cancer treatments.

5. Wayne’s Reflection on the first seven reflections: **NOTE: as of yet, we have remained in the big group for sharing and discussion time. Let us know if you think discussion would be enhanced if we broke the group into two break out rooms.**

- a. Reflection #1: Four Lenses to Perceive Reality: (Points raised in discussion follow each reflection by Wayne.) Here is the overview in Fr. Richard’s own words:



## b. Reflection #2: The Pattern of Spiritual Transformation I

Wayne talked about the words Conversion and Transformation. Conversion has taken on a more negative meaning in recent years. Rohr's vision of Spiritual Conversion is moving from perfect order in our lives, into disorder and confusion and eventually (hopefully) into re-order. Comments from discussion:

Death in our circle often throws us into disorder.

We have a bias... "Know Yourself"

World views change over time. Material world view finds one treating life as temporary — appeals to many — fundamentalism in our world, among R.C. in South America.

Self-help (Priestly WorldView) and organized religion offers an appeal.

Some, not all of us, move to the Incarnational lens where spiritual and priestly combine — not a matter of age but always a tough process and a goal

World Views theology ties in with Nancy's recent focus on Change. "Reorder requires letting go, admitting life is different. First three views all have expectation involved — work hard and they are yours. Incarnational world view is about acceptance and not expectation. We seek the recipe.

A couples' exercise with the suggested timeline of turning points in a marriage is a good idea... what created order / disorder / reorder.

c. Reflections #3, #4, #5, #6, #7: The Pattern of Spiritual Transformation II, Christ is everywhere, Contemplation, The First Incarnation, Personal and Universal — The Second Incarnation... Discussion following each slide was incredible and moved seamlessly from one reflection to the next.

COVID changed many of our familiar patterns—

We had to grieve the loss of loved ones from afar.

Much time could be devoted to stillness and silent prayer.

Vision of life has changed for many of us. What we visioned our lives to be changed greatly. **"Give up control. Roll with it!"**

Some of us changed from traditionalists to liberalists over time.

**Only constant in our lives is change.**

Simplest things like hand washing can become a mindful, contemplative activity.

“Come into the moment... we live in such a beautiful world.”

“Failure is to successfully try.”

“Covid slowed us down.” NOTE: I have a long time friend who hasn’t had a house guest visit since COVID began. In January we visited him, sitting on his front step.

Achievement as a focus doesn’t allow us time to look back and reflect.

The deliberate practice of Lent and Advent have taught us about “Waiting.”

EveryThing is visible... the outpouring of God, all encompassing.”

From p. 44: “A mere personal God becomes tribal and sentimental and a mere universal God never leaves the realm of abstract theory and philosophical principles. To be loved by Jesus enlarges our heart capacity. We need both a Jesus and a Christ... to get the full picture. A truly transformative God, for both the individual and history, needs to be experienced as both personal and universal.” Fr. Richard Rohr

**6. Homework:** Michael tells us that he has actively answered the questions asked following each reflection: With our timelines of turning points in our faith journey ready from last week, here is our homework for next week as we read...

**Reflection #8, Becoming**

a. What aspects of your life do you tend to ignore or exclude? What experiences, stories and opinions do you tend to shy away from, even though they are truly a part of who God made you to be?

b. What identities have you constructed that protect you from showing areas of vulnerability or fear or shame to yourself and others? Reflect for a moment on the energy you expend to maintain these identities.

c. Notice what’s coming to mind as you read these questions. You may want to pray or journal about the process of becoming more of who God made you to be, your True Self.

**Reflection #9: Path Toward Inner Aliveness**

a. Take five minutes to silently reflect on significant decisions you have made in your life — career choice? relationships? friendships?

b. Were you more influenced by the expectations of others or by your own inner aliveness?

c. Write a journal entry about your sense of connection to your inner aliveness today. Notice emotions and sensations that this journaling exercise invokes.

**Reflection #10: Including**

a. Think of a time when you excluded someone because of something you disliked. How did it affect the other person? How did it affect you?

b. How have you felt included by others? Think of an example and journal as much as you can remember... from initial moment of inclusion — how did it make you feel?

c. Consider the moment of exclusion or inclusion and trust your gut instinct to guide you as well as the possible responses given at the end of the reflection.

**Reflection #11: Our Own Human Experience**

a. Consider a quote from page 43 of Universal Christ. "... all of us, without exception, are living inside of a cosmic identity, already in place that is driving and guiding us forward. We are all en Cristo, willingly or unwillingly, happily or unhappily, consciously or unconsciously." What words stand out for you? What emotions do you feel? What physical sensations are you aware of as you read and reread the passage. Write a journal entry of your experience.

**Reflection #12: Image, Love and Suffering**

- a. What words would you use to describe your image of God?
- b. How has this image been modeled by others around you.
- c. Would others characterize you as someone who 'circle of belonging' are expanding or constricting as your life goes on?

**Reflection #13: Primal Goodness**

- a. Describe God from Genesis 3 and Genesis 1 world views.
- b. How have you experienced these world views in your daily life? affected your self image and your perceptions?
- c. Notice any desires you have for the future. Pray about or journal your response.

**Reflection #14: The Great Chain of Being**

- a. Remember a time when a link of the chain helped you see the 'whole sacred universe.' Another person? a piece of art? a book?
- b. Journal how the experience drew you out of yourself.

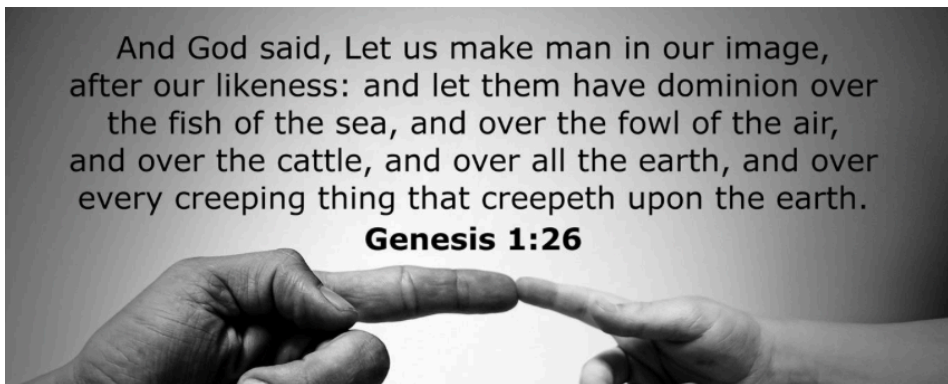
How exciting is this? I have both the book in written and in audio so will spend time this week working with both mediums. P.S. Elizabeth George's book "Consequences" and building soup will be obstacles, for sure.

**7. Final Thoughts:**

- a. catholic translates as universal
- b. Conservative thinking is less traditional than we think. Tradition tends to be viewed as 20th century thinking — much went on previously.
- c. We lost the contemplative/ universal influence of the eastern church when the huge divide took place in 1044.
- d. Five times God says creation is good in Genesis 1 and concludes that it is very good.
- e. Jesus was not a problem solver but a vision creator.
- f. Image of God has to be an expanding image as big as the universe.
- g. Original goodness = original blessing — not a new idea but a forgotten one.
- h. We are good...
- i. Nature provides a prayerful time for being close to Good



j. Genesis 1:26



Happy journaling!

Thoughtfully yours,

Brenda (have a great week!)



OPIE, Fr. Richard's Dog

