

Centering Prayer for September 21 or 22, 2020

With Rod McAulay

I have occasionally used the writings of Laurence Freeman for these reflections. I think of Freeman as the English counterpart to the American Richard Rohr. Both are Franciscan monks who lead retreats and write extensively about Centering Prayer, meditation, Christology and finding our connection with the divine. The paragraph below comes from Freeman's book, ***Jesus the Teacher Within***. (The Forward in this book was written by the Dalai Lama.)

Instructions: You are invited to pause every Monday evening at 6:00 PM or Tuesday morning at 9:30 AM. Find a comfortable place to sit for 25 minutes without interruption. Set a timer to tell you when the time has passed. Turn off the phone. Read the opening reflection (below). Close your eyes. Listen to your breathing. In rhythm with your breath repeat a sacred word to help stop the business – the chattering monkeys – in your mind. Rest with God. When a thought rises in your mind, gently push it away. When the time is done reflect on your personal thanksgivings then quietly enter into your evening or new day.

Opening reflection for September 21 or 22, 2020

Jesus the Teach Within, p. 232:

'I' is always an individual. But the word 'individual' has totally changed its meaning in the last century. Originally it meant indivisible. *Individuus* was the translation of the Greek *atomos* which meant 'not cuttable, not divisible'. In medieval theology *individual* could even describe the indivisible unity of the Trinity. Husband and wife were also *individual* in this sense. Once an 'individual' was a person or thing seen in relation to the whole it belonged to. The whole defined the individual because the individual was indivisible from it. Until the eighteenth century the word was rarely used except in relation to the group of which it was a part. Then by the mid-nineteenth century Darwin in ***The Origin of Species*** could use it in a quite different sense 'no one supposes that all individuals of the same species are cast in the same actual mould'. Philosophy took this individualism further by seeing the individual as the 'substantial entity' from which the whole was derived. The tail had begun to wag the dog. . . . Only God, as Simone Weil said, has the right to say 'I'.