

Soul-Link, Inc.

"...fostering an awareness of and response to the sacred in nature, human nature and events of everyday life."

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Soul-Link Council

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Good Grief: Change, Loss and Grief in Everyday Life

John Zay, Chaplain, at Penrose-St. Francis Hospital, will present a two-session class which focuses on grief. He will discuss the dynamics of grief--grief resulting from the loss of a loved one, as well as the grief we experience as a result of change and loss in everyday life.

The classes will offer presentation, reflection, and opportunities for discussion. There is no fee for these two sessions, but participants should register by calling the Soul-Link number: **473-5852**. Classes will take place in the Holy Trinity Parish Meeting House at 3117 Poinsetta Dr.

**Upcoming potluck & discussion gatherings
May 13, June 10 - 6:30-8:00 P.M.

**Next quarterly retreat will be Fall 2002

**Watch for upcoming summer activities which will likely include Hiking, Book Discussion Groups; Movie Viewing/Discussion Groups



If you know someone who is interested in learning more about Soul-Link, please encourage her/him to visit our web site at www.soullinkonline.org and/or call the Soul-Link phone number, **(719) 473-5852** and leave a message. A Soul-Link Council member will return the call.

Soul-Link Council Plans for the Future

Soul-Link Council members recently participated in a strategic visioning process using AMCat (*Advanced Management Catalyst*) offered through the Center for Creative Leadership. In an effort to plan for the future of Soul-Link, council members engaged in a process which included: creating a vision, brainstorming options, developing objectives, establishing priorities, identifying constraints, establishing goals and milestones, organizing projects and identifying teams. The end result of the AMCat planning process is a more focused organizational energy that takes groups from where they are to where they want to be as quickly as possible.

Looking to the year 2007, the following **vision statement** was written by the Council:

Soul-Link, a non-profit organization, offers opportunities for spiritual growth, learning, and celebration for people seeking deeper meaning and purpose in their lives. Mindful of challenges to the earth's sustainability, we foster an awareness of and response to the sacred in nature, human nature and events of everyday life.

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Suggested Reading

You asked and we're responding with some suggestions of books you may find spiritually enriching. We welcome your suggestions. If you've recently read something you think others would enjoy, send us the information via e-mail on the Soul-Link web site: www.soullinkonline.org or mail your suggestions to: Soul-Link, Inc., P. O. Box 7790, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7790.

Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life: *McNeill, Donald, Morrison, Douglas, Nouwen, Henri; Doubleday;*

In this provocative book of meditations, three teachers of pastoral theology challenge us to make God's compassion manifest through the disciplines of prayer and action.

Open Mind, Open Heart: *Keating, Thomas; Element Press;*

Trappist monk, Thomas Keating, provides a clear and easily-understandable introduction to a form of centering prayer from the Christian tradition. He includes a description of what centering prayer is and is not, a history of centering prayer in the Christian tradition and provides explanations for each step in the process. Each chapter includes a question/answer section.

Marcus Borg Lectures

Marcus Borg will present a lecture on Friday night, April 5, 8:00 P.M. entitled "**The Meanings of Faith.**" This session will be held at Shove Chapel on the CC campus, and in Borg's words will be "*an exploration of the rich meanings of the word "faith" in the Christian tradition, emphasizing that faith is not very much about belief, but is about our relationship with God and a way of seeing 'what is'.*" This lecture is open to all and free of charge.

The Seminar Series: "**With New Eyes: The Heart of Christianity**" will be held on Saturday, April 6 in the Theatre at the First Methodist Church, 420 Nevada (due to space limitations on campus). These three lectures explore what is most central to seeing and living the Christian life today. What emerges is a historical, metaphorical and sacramental way of seeing the Christian tradition, and a relational and transformational vision of the Christian life. Each lecture will be followed by time for questions and responses. The sessions are:
8:45 a.m. - "The Reality of 'The More'"
10:45 a.m. - "Born Again: Recovering a Metaphor"
1:45 p.m. - "Open Hearts and Thin Places"

There will be a \$20.00 fee for these more intensive sessions. For more information, please contact Mrs. Rory Wolfe or Professor Joseph Pickle at borgatcc@coloradocollege.edu or call (719) 389-6147 and leave a message.

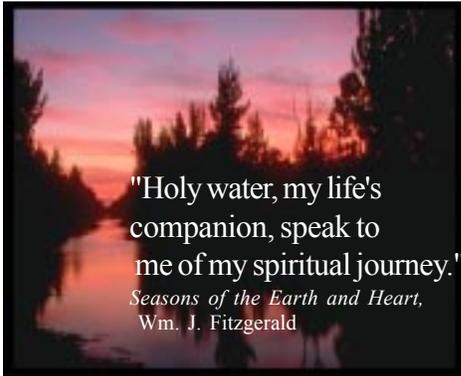
Soul-Link Council Planning for the Future, Cont'd from page 1

As an open community we support each other, giving voice to and exploring the longings of our souls.

Inviting the wisdom of elders and insights of youth, we create an ever-evolving circle of connectedness where all are welcome, from those seeking an occasional spiritual experience to those desiring deeper levels of community. We honor the views and traditions of all Soul-Link participants.

During the planning process, fourteen objectives emerged as a focus for the next five years. Council members are continuing to discern the specifics of these objectives.

1. Developing resources
2. Bridging infrastructure and roles
3. Developing programs for organizations
4. Expanding administration
5. Creating retreats
6. Developing marketing plan
7. Developing mini-offerings
8. Connecting with community groups
9. Reaching out to organizations
10. Developing alliances
11. Expanding online presence
12. Linking to the earth's soul
13. Evaluating efforts
14. Sharing Stories



"Holy water, my life's companion, speak to me of my spiritual journey."
Seasons of the Earth and Heart,
 Wm. J. Fitzgerald

Attitude and Awareness,
 Presence and Possibility

Do you recall times when you struggled to make sense out of life? When your prayer seemed dry?

I have discovered that it was actually in the **midst** of great struggle that I learned more about prayer. For me, prayer became less about forming the "right" words and more about attitude, awareness, presence and possibility. I realized that praying was not so much about talking as it was and is about listening and reshaping my interior to be more aware and receptive to all that is holy.

In the past, I thought my greatest obstacle to prayer was, "there's not enough time." In more recent years, I wondered if the greatest obstacle wasn't really something within me. I felt challenged to explore my own vulnerability--that space or dimension of self which keeps me from hardness of heart, rigidity, and from shutting others out. When I embrace my most vulnerable self, when surrendering does occur, I believe prayers of many words are swept away and something "new" occurs: I do not speak, I do not ask. There is a mystical movement and a Sacred presence within moves me and leads me in ways I had not dreamed. In these moments, I catch a glimpse into the mystery of who I am; the unfolding, unfinished mystery.

My spiritual journey has taught me that a life which is lived fully--from the heart and soul of truest self and grounded in awareness, will lead us to a place where the whole of life becomes sacred. In this encounter, we will know what it is to let everything bless us.
 --CoCo Soper, *Soul-Link Council Member*



"Don't tell me how wonderful things will be . . . someday. Show me you can risk being completely at peace, truly okay with the way things are right now in this moment, and again in the next and the next and the next . . ." --The Dance, Oriah Mountain Dreamer

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- March 11 6:30-8:00P.M. Potluck and Discussion at Holy Trinity Parish Meeting House - 3117 Poinsetta Dr.
- March 12 7:00-8:30 P.M. Good Grief: Change, & Mar. 19 Loss and Grief in Everyday Life Holy Trinity Parish Meeting House 3117 Poinsetta Dr.
- April 5 8:00 P.M. Marcus Borg at CC
- April 6 Marcus Borg at First Methodist Church *(See page 1 for details)*
- April 8 6:30-8:00 P.M. Potluck and Discussion - Holy Trinity Parish Meeting House *(Opportunity for those who choose, to discuss and react to Marcus Borg sessions)*
- April 13 9:00 A.M.-2:30 P.M. - Next Quarterly Soul-Link Retreat at the Center for Creative Leadership *(Additional info. and registration forms will be mailed later)*
- May 13 6:30-8:00 P.M. Potluck and Discussion - Holy Trinity Parish Meeting House - 3117 Poinsetta Dr.



Did You Know?

- Soul-Link currently has 200 plus participants
- You may now contact Soul-Link leadership using e-mail on our web site:
www.soulinkonline.org
- You may read and/or print a copy of both the current and the last issue of the Soul-Link newsletter from our web site

Relationships

Relationships bring spirituality down to earth...the care and love we give to others is actually at the heart of spirituality. Since there is, in fact, no separation between us, to give is to receive.

Relationships: The Great Challenge

There are two cornerstone ideas that appear again and again in most spiritual writings on relationships. On the one hand, there is the notion that we are all one. Not only are we all related to each other as travelers on planet earth, but in a spiritual sense our essences are inextricably intertwined. We come from the same source and we are all on a common journey.

On the other hand, there is the notion that each of us is whole, complete, and perfect--exactly as we are. All that we need is contained within us.

The challenge of relationships, then, is to consciously make use of the double-edged sword of their paradoxical nature. The path of relationships leads us through the veil of separation to a realization of our ultimate oneness.

Relationships as a Path

Through their own relationship and their therapy practice, Harrison and Olivia Hoblitzelle, two therapists from Cambridge, Massachusetts, have found that certain attitudes encourage a spiritual relationship. They offer the following suggestions:

(1) Acknowledge that you have a sense of karmic destiny. It's important that people accept that they are together for a purpose that goes beyond personal satisfactions. They are together to be teachers to each other and to recognize the divinity in one another.

(2) Respect the divine longing in one another to the greater meaning of life beyond our limited sense of ourselves.

Relationships bring spirituality down to earth . . .



(3) Accept the relationship as a central part of your spiritual path. In India, they speak of the sadhana, or "practice" of relationship as being "hot like a chile pepper." Don't expect it to be easy.

(4) Look at difficulties as a training. Relationships are a perfect learning experience to develop mindfulness and understanding of where we are caught in old models, attachments and identifications.

(5) Have faith in the process of growth and change in your partner as well as yourself. You can specifically help your partner by providing support during difficult periods, giving space for developing a spiritual practice even though it may be different from your own, and creating a balance of time alone and time together--of solitude and society.

(6) Keep before you the vision of your partner's true self--especially when it is lost to view. And also keep the faith that believing in your partner's true self will cause it to manifest.

(The above is an excerpt from *Chop Wood, Carry Water*, Fields, Taylor, Weyler, Ingrassi, pp37-39.)

Have you thought of including Soul-Link in your charitable contributions?

Soul-Link, Inc. is a 501(C) nonprofit organization registered with the State of Colorado. Your contributions are tax deductible.

If you or someone you know would like to contribute to Soul-Link, please contact the Soul-Link Council at: **Soul-Link, Inc. P.O.Box 7790, C.S. CO 80933-7790.**

Thank You!