

The Community of Reconciliation at Washington National Cathedral



A Monastic Quiet Day

18-19 September 2009 | Washington National Cathedral

A Benedictine Spiritual Community
of Washington National Cathedral and The Friends of St. Benedict

THE COMMUNITY OF RECONCILIATION | A MONASTIC QUIET DAY

A DAY OF LIVING IN MONASTIC SILENCE AND PRAYER

18-19 September 2009

INTRODUCTION

The Community of Reconciliation invites you to spend a full 24 hour period in monastic prayer and silence. Our 24 hours of intention begins in your home on Friday evening and continues throughout Saturday in the beautiful spaces of The National Cathedral and the grounds of the Cathedral Close. We will observe liturgy, meals, the Daily Office, and conferences all within the walls of the Cathedral and the Cathedral College. During our time together we will create a 'monastery of the heart' and offer you a chance to participate in an authentic contemplative experience.

We ask that you register at your earliest convenience in order for us to plan for meals and room setup. Meals are included with your participant fee. Please know that in Benedictine tradition, walk-ins will always be received with open arms on Saturday. There is always room at the table!

LOCATION

As you review the schedule for our retreat below you will notice we are asking that you start your quiet day Friday evening at home. Saturday morning we convene at the Cathedral Bethlehem Chapel for Eucharist, then move to the Cathedral College where we will share simple meals, silence, dialogue, study, intentional conversation, and reflection.

Our retreat is centered in the Cathedral College. The College has housed retreats and programs since the Cathedral opened. It is a 'monastic' building in that it is set apart for prayer and study, offering us the opportunity to create an authentic monastic quiet day. With its beautiful chapel, dedicated refectory, and rooms and grounds for contemplation, the Cathedral College will become our monastery for the day.

Washington National Cathedral Arrival | For detailed instructions on visiting the Cathedral by foot, auto, or metro visit: <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/visit/>.

Washington National Cathedral Parking | FREE parking is available on the Cathedral Close after 3:30PM weekdays and on weekends (Garage parking is free on Sundays only.) We ask that you respect our neighbors and honor all parking restrictions. Visit <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/pdfs/CloseVisitorMap.pdf> for a map of the Close and parking areas.

To locate Bethlehem Chapel | Directions

Enter through the Way of Peace entrance (at the southeast corner of the Cathedral on South Road, off Wisconsin Avenue). Visit <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/pdfs/CloseVisitorMap.pdf> for a map of the Close and parking areas. You will find the chapel to your right as you enter the Crypt level of the Cathedral. We will gather together in silence and will fully participate in the liturgy of

Eucharist. You are encouraged to allow the first words of your morning to be those spoken in Eucharist.

If you are at distance or not able to join us for other reasons you may wish to participate at home, using the following guide. Every intention for the rhythms of silence and prayer is honored. Also, plan now to attend the Monastic Quiet Day 19-20 February 2010.

A DAY OF SILENCE

Friday September 18, 2009

- 6pm Dinner (please enjoy with your family or alone)
- 7:30pm Office of Compline---Your retreat begins
- 7:45pm The Great Silence

Saturday September 19, 2009

- 7:30 am Eucharist | Washington National Cathedral, Bethlehem Chapel
- 8:00 am Breakfast | Cathedral College refectory | in silence
- 8:15 am End of the Great Silence | Greg Finch and Kurt Aschermann
- 8:55 am Call to prayer | Bell
- 9:00 am Morning Prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel
- 9:30-11 am Conference #1 | *The Daily Office as a foundation for lay contemplatives* | Cathedral College, Great Room | Kurt
- 11 am Contemplative Prayer/lectio divina | Kurt
- 11:55 am Call to prayer | Bell
- 12 noon Mid-Day prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel
- 12:15 pm Lunch and conversation | Cathedral College, refectory
- 1 pm Conference #2 | *Creating a Rule of Life* | Cathedral College, Great Room | Greg
- 3pm Walking meditation | The Bishop's Garden | Greg
- 4pm Reflection and Discussion | *What do we do with this day as we step beyond the walls of "this monastery?"* | Cathedral College, Great Room | Kurt

- 4:55 pm Call to prayer | Bell
- 5pm Evening Prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel
- 5:15pm Dismissal | Greg and Kurt

THE SPECIFICS

Friday September 18, 2009—Your monastic experience will be greatly enhanced if you begin the night before and stick to this schedule in your home. It is important you take time with your family or housemates to explain what you are doing-why you are being silent and what it means for them.

Explain that you are ‘on retreat’ and with children you may want to show them the program. They may ask if they can talk and of course the answer is yes. Beginning your retreat at home with the support of those who surround you models a goal of the Community of Reconciliation, to live the rhythms of balance into our daily lives. Following is a guide for the evening. Attention to the guide will provide the most authentic experience of a Monastic Day. As always, in Benedictine practice and in the Community, adapt it for use in ways that are “not burdensome.”

- 6pm Dinner (please enjoy with your family or alone)

Dinner at home is a good place for you to talk about your retreat. This meal requires nothing special of you other than to be intentional about it being part of your Benedictine Quiet Day. Just knowing you are having dinner at the same time as everyone else joining you on retreat adds importance to the meal.

- 7:30pm Office of Compline---Your retreat begins

Your retreat starts with the Monastic Office of Compline. This is the last prayer service of the day in the Monastery and it provides a beginning for our retreat and a prelude to the Great Silence to follow.

Compline offers us a chance to reflect upon our day, those things we have done well alongside those that perhaps we might wish to have done differently. Through the liturgy of Compline we acknowledge our shortcomings and embrace Divine protection through the night.

If you have a Book of Common Prayer you will find Compline on page 127. We suggest you read this office in silence. The key Psalms are 4 and 91 which are traditional Compline psalms. Just think, you will be joining monks, nuns, and laypersons *around the world who are all reading these exact same psalms at about the same time as you are.*

In the Book of Common Prayer the Office then simply flows from the psalms.

If you do not have a Book of Common Prayer or wish to simplify things you can use this Order of Service for Compline.

Confession

*The Lord Almighty Grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end. Amen
Our help is in the name of the Lord
The maker of heaven and earth*

Silent reflection on your day

*Lord forgive me for I have sinned against you through my own fault
In what I have done
And what I have left undone
For the sake of your son Jesus Christ forgive me my offenses*

Psalms 4 and 91

Scripture

*Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion
seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith
1 Peter 5:8-9a*

Silence

The Lord's prayer

Closing

*Antiphon-- Guide us waking O lord and guard us sleeping
That awake we may watch with Christ
And sleep we may rest in peace*

Nunc dimittis

*Lord you now have set your servant free
To go in peace as you have promised
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior
Whom you have prepared for all the world to see
A light to enlighten the nations
And the glory of your people, Israel*

Glory to the Father...

Repeat antiphon

7:45pm The Great Silence- In the monastery conversation ends after Compline through breakfast the next day. We will follow the same practice so please

refrain from speaking after this point. If you have not had a chance to explain this to your family, now is the time to do it so they will not disturb you in retreat.

We suggest you retire early to be ready for the full day on Saturday.

Saturday September 19, 2009

In some monasteries the monks and nuns wake at 3:30 am to begin their day. We aren't suggesting you do that (unless you want to) however, we do suggest that you rise early to prepare for a full day in our 'monastery.' Perhaps you will want to acknowledge God immediately, maybe even before you get out of bed. Something simple like 'Lord thank you for this new day' will suffice.

On your way to the Cathedral remain in silence. Keep the radio off in the car and try to remain in the silent frame of mind you begun the night before.

7:30 am Eucharist | Washington National Cathedral, Bethlehem Chapel

Remember we are still in silence. We speak when called for during the Eucharist. Idle conversation is discouraged. ON arrival, we will try to sit together. Since you will not yet know which "pilgrims" will be joining you, look for Greg Finch who will be seated in the Chapel.

Following the Eucharist, we will process to the Cathedral College. Look for the processional cross. Remember, however, we are still in the Great Silence.

8:00 am Breakfast | Cathedral College refectory | in silence

As in the monastery we will listen to a reading during our meal.

After our meal we, will honor the practice of work by placing our dishes as directed. Some will be asked to help clean up in the kitchen. As in the monastery, no one is exempt from work and during our day we will use our meals as a chance to fulfill this important Benedictine responsibility.

8:15 am End of the Great Silence | Greg Finch and Kurt Aschermann

8:55 am Call to prayer | Bell

The bell/singing bowl will ring five minutes before each prayer service throughout the Cathedral College. You are asked to immediately go to the Chapel when you hear the bell so the Office can begin promptly on the hour. (St. Benedict affirmed encouraged monks/nuns to drop what they are doing when they heard the bell and 'hasten to the church!')

9:00 am Morning Prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel

During our three services we will pray using the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. Our chairs will be situated opposite each other so we can read the Psalms antiphonally. We will also be taught, then use, a more contemplative way to pray the Office together. Some will be asked to read scripture and lead prayer.

9:30-11 am Conference #1 | *The Daily Office as a foundation for lay contemplatives*
Cathedral College, Great Room | Kurt

It can be argued that for lay contemplatives to experience the power of Benedictine spirituality we have to participate in this the most basic exercise in the monastery-regular, scheduled prayer. In this conference we will explore how to pray the Office using traditional prayer books and we will learn how to turn our Bible into a breviary for the Daily Office. (Please bring your BCP and Bible if you have one. If you do not they will be provided).

11 am Contemplative Prayer/lectio divina | Kurt

Benedict provided more time for reflective/prayerful reading in his Rule than almost any other exercise. We will talk about lectio and how we can use it to strengthen our prayer life. Then we will be invited to retreat to a quiet place in the Cathedral College or Cathedral to use lectio divina for prayer.

11:55 am Call to prayer | Bell

12 noon Mid-Day prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel

12:15 pm Lunch and conversation –Cathedral College refectory
Again some will be asked to work in the kitchen following the meal

1 pm Conference #2 | *Creating a Rule of Life* | Cathedral College, Great Room | Greg

The Rule of Saint Benedict shaped the life of his fledgling community and subsequent communities that have followed the way of Benedict for thousands of years. During our time, we will explore the foundations and practices of the Rule. We will set out intentions for creating our own Rule of Life, and we will take time in small group conversation as a discovery process that will assist us in shaping our own Rule.

3pm Walking meditation | The Bishop's Garden | Greg

4pm Reflection and Discussion | *What do we do with this day as we step beyond the walls of "this monastery?"* | Cathedral College, Great Room | Kurt

4:55 pm Call to prayer | Bell

5pm Evening Prayer as a community | Cathedral College, Chapel

Our final Office together ends our day. It is in this Office that we thank God for the blessings of our time together and prepare to leave “our monastery.”

5:15pm Dismissal | Greg and Kurt

Notes

- If you have one, bring a copy of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer. We will have several available if needed.
- Bring reading material (poetry, scripture, wisdom literature) for the practice of lectio divina (a reflective reading and meditation process)
- Bring your journal if you wish.
- Wear comfortable clothing including comfortable shoes
- You may wish to continue your quiet day even after you leave the community; it is sometimes hard to “come down” after 24 hours of silence—another thing you will want to discuss with your family.
- If you have questions or concerns please don’t hesitate to call Kurt (617-962-6220) or Greg (202-537-6217) at any time.

We look forward to seeing you at the Cathedral of the Heart—

The Community of Reconciliation at Washington National Cathedral is an emerging ecumenical network of individuals seeking balance in life and a deepening commitment to reconciliation in the world. The Community engages the ancient Christian wisdom and practices of Benedictine spirituality to discover the balance and harmony found in a cloistered community—right in our own environments—family, the workplace, and daily life in a complex world. All are welcome.



— WASHINGTON —
NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

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To learn more about upcoming gatherings and events, to RSVP or make a donation, or for additional details visit <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/worship/cor.shtml>

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