

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

From the Center for Action and Contemplation



Week Twenty-seven

Wisdom in Times of Crisis

Our Spiritual Health

Thursday, July 9, 2020

Brian McLaren, a member of the CAC Living School faculty, reminds us why it matters that we pay attention to our health, not only physically but spiritually and ethically as well.

In these challenging, difficult times, we are discovering a wisdom that we needed all along, and that wisdom is that we are all connected. We are not separate. We used to think that we caught diseases as individuals: "I'm sick; you're not." But now we realize, no, we catch diseases as individuals who are part of families, and families who are part of cities, and cities that are part of states and nations. We realize now that our whole species can become infected, and that our whole globe can be changed because of our interconnectedness. . .

Maybe this is also an opportunity for us to become enlightened about some other viruses that have been spreading and causing even greater damage, without being acknowledged: social and spiritual viruses that spread among us from individual to individual, from generation to generation, and are not named. We don't organize against them, and so they continue to spread and cause all kinds of sickness [and death]. Social and spiritual viruses like racism, white supremacy, human supremacy, Christian supremacy, any kind of hostility that is spread, based on prejudice and fear.

What would happen if we said, as passionate as we are about being tested for coronavirus, we all wanted to test ourselves for these social and spiritual viruses that could be lurking inside of us? And then, when I come into your presence, I, in some way, inflict this virus on you. I make you suffer. What an awesome opportunity for us to say and begin to pray that we would be healed and cleansed, not just of a physical virus, but of these other invisible viruses that are such a huge and devastating part of human history. . . .

In this pandemic, many of us are nostalgic for the old normal. We want to get back to our favorite coffee shop, our favorite restaurant, our church service. And of course, there's nothing wrong with so many of those desires for the old normal. But I'd like to make a proposal. If we are wise in this time, we will not go back unthinkingly to the old normal. There were problems with that old normal many of us weren't aware of.

The old normal, when you look at it from today's perspective, was not so great, not something to be nostalgic about, without also being deeply critical of it. As we experience discomfort in this time, let's begin to dream of a new normal, a new normal that addresses the weaknesses and problems that were going unaddressed in the old normal. If we're wise, we won't go back; we'll go forward.

Gateway to Action & Contemplation:

What word or phrase resonates with or challenges me? What sensations do I notice in my body? What is mine to do?

Prayer for Our Community:

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. [Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen.

[Listen to Fr. Richard read the prayer.](#)

Story from Our Community:

*I hear sirens constantly [where I live], ambulances transporting more and more people suffering from COVID-19. Inspired by a recent podcast episode of *Another Name for Every Thing*, I started to pray, "Lord, have mercy" every time I heard [an ambulance]. Over the weeks, I've added onto it: "Lord, have mercy. Give them the breath they need, both oxygen and the life-sustaining breath of the Holy Spirit. Grant them comfort and peace." — Elizabeth G.*

[Share your own story with us.](#)

From Brian McLaren, "We Are All Connected," *Wisdom in Times of Crisis* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2020), faculty presentation (April 20, 2020), YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FOeCyEzbiM>;

"Other Sicknesses of the Soul," *Wisdom in Times of Crisis* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2020), faculty presentation (May 6, 2020), YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3SUyoDfG-Q&list=PLiBbqGAOPnXMcKh7QaqCf9HU5ShaAEzeH&index=17>; and

"Dreaming of a New Normal," *Wisdom in Times of Crisis* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2020), faculty presentation (May 6, 2020), YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weGPpvdZ058&list=PLiBbqGAOPnXMcKh7QaqCf9HU5ShaAEzeH&index=18>.

Image credit: *Cueva de las Manos* (detail), Cañadón del Río, Santa Cruz, Argentina.
Photograph copyright 2012 Pablo Gimenez.

[Forward to a Friend →](#)

Forward this email to a friend or family member that may find it meaningful.

Was this email forwarded to you? Sign up for the daily, weekly, or monthly meditations.

[Sign Up →](#)

News from the CAC

Free Essay: [Contemplating Anger](#) by Barbara Holmes

In these times of suffering and disorder, we look for a path to solidarity with those held down by dehumanizing systems of oppression. We invite you to read [Contemplating Anger](#), a 2018 ONEING essay by faculty member Dr. Barbara Holmes, in hopes that her words will help us step across the boundaries of our comfortable certainties and embrace a communal contemplative movement of racial solidarity.

[A Study in Search of True Self](#)

Mine for the real you that has been there all along, hidden under the trappings of ego and false self in [Immortal Diamond: A Study in Search of True Self](#). Based off Richard Rohr's best selling book, this 10-week online course helps reveal a path for those who are drawn to God, but for some reason also feel distant from God. Financial aid is available until July 22 and registration closes July 29.

[Breathing Under Water](#)

Take a spiritual study of the Twelve Steps to let go of egoic attachments in [Breathing Under Water](#), an 8-week online course from Richard Rohr and the Center for Action and Contemplation. Connect and learn with hundreds of online participants as you develop the alternative consciousness needed to break free from the dominant ego self. Apply for financial assistance by Aug. 12. Registrations ends Aug. 19 or when full.

Action & Contemplation

[2020 Daily Meditations Theme](#)

What does God ask of us? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. —Micah 6:8

Franciscan Richard Rohr founded the Center for Action and Contemplation in 1987 because he saw a deep need for the integration of both action and contemplation. If we pray but don't act justly, our faith won't bear fruit. And without contemplation, activists burn out and even well-intended actions can cause more harm than good. In today's religious, environmental, and political climate our compassionate engagement is urgent and vital.

In this year's Daily Meditations, Father Richard helps us learn the dance of action and contemplation. Each week builds on previous topics, but you can join at any time! Click the video to learn more about the theme and to find reflections you may have missed.



[Click here to learn about contemplative prayer and other forms of meditation.](#) For frequently asked questions—such as what versions of the Bible Father Richard recommends or how to ensure you receive every meditation—[please see our email FAQ.](#) Visit cac.org to explore other ways to connect with the Center for Action and Contemplation.



Use the "Forward" button above to share this email. Explore Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations archive at cac.org. Visit CAC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) to connect with others and explore more ideas about contemplation.

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations are made possible through the generosity of CAC's donors. [Please consider making a tax-deductible donation.](#)

If you would like to change how often you receive emails from CAC, [click here](#). If you would like to change your email address, [click here](#). Visit our [Email Subscription FAQ page](#) for more information. [Submit an inquiry here](#) for additional assistance.

Inspiration for this week's banner image: *As a spiritual practice we can wake up to the possibility of building a new order. We can improvise those possibilities; try them out in the creative microcosm of a shared public life, realizing that our way of life before the pandemic was not perfect.* —Barbara Holmes