

## Holy Week 2024 An Imaginal Vigil

I'd like to say that for people who do not keep big notes at home, the exercise we just did was part of two different exercises.

So the first half of 51 and then the first half of 53.

And that they are followed by some small different possibilities.

If you have questions about it or you want to clarify anything, just come straight to me about it and I can help you with that.

But otherwise, I'm really grateful for all the work that you all did.

It was special to me.

So thanks for that.

It was a moment for sure, Andrew.

And I think that you've beautifully encapsulated and tied together a lot of what we were talking about last night when I gave you the overflow of the pouring subject and how we get it into our body.

It was so clear to me.

This gives you a whole different thing to do.

Rather than spending so much time ruminating about your life and your history and everything like that, why not do an exercise?

Why not see if you can invite your right hand to fully breathe and animate the whole new range of how you begin to become present?

And what if growing a second body was not some weird sort of voodoo?

"Oh, he's waiting in a second body.

Is it going to come out of the genie jar yet?"

It was just a microscopic, moment-by-moment commitment to favor building that kind of a self and mind over sort of living in the cul-de-sac of your egoic narrative story.

So with that, Vesna.

[Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music] [Music]  
[Music] And can you tell us all, Vesna, what you just played?

"Hymn for Good Friday."

If you took that in directly through your two arms, you probably knew that already.

So, yeah, I wanted to begin today with just an overview of the day, because we're going to be shifting gears a little.

It will have a different rhythm.

We're in Good Friday.

And what I mentioned a little bit just at the end of the session this morning is just if you recall that image that Gurdjieff gave us grillingly in the Four Ideals exercise of Jerusalem and Mecca and India and Tibet, and over each one of them a sort of stirring of activity as the faithful offer up their prayers and receive assistance, as their yearning calls forth in a particular way the presence of their ideal.

If we were looking at that at some sort of an electronic computer sort of thing, we'd see a lot of activity going on in the Christian quadrant today.

As around the world, the ancient tradition is to commemorate the time particularly between 12 and 3 when, by strong oral memory, Christ hung on the cross as a time for particular self-remembrance and already that's happening.

I mean, where are we now?

9.30?

We're 12 o'clock somewhere out.

I'm sure the people in Iceland are already well into it.

So you can just sort of feel like the great sun sweeping across the sundial of the earth as various quadrants heat up.

And of course that rebalances the whole, if you consider the four quadrants of the earth a whole.

This activity of the Christian quadrant is being equalized in the greater cosmic universe.

So we're both paying into that and drawing from it today.

And so if we're aware of that, it does give us a particular, both an invitation and a responsibility to our work because inescapably we are part of that whole.

So today we will, in our own way, be commemorating that passage.

Okay, so I want today, in the sort of teaching vision of this, which will be the last kind of formal teaching, to return to this grand scheme of cosmic redemption and the theme of how is it that the heart of the Christian mystery can put forth the claim that in this kind of garden variety political assassination, that Jesus somehow redeemed the world, changed the footing of the world.

And when we started talking with this on Tuesday, I worked at it from the kind of cosmometaphysical roadmap point of view, the big picture, the worlds, the exchange between the worlds.

And today I want to come back at it and look at it from a different and a kind of, in a way, more feeling-centered approach to it.

That we've talked about before that this fact, this reality that there is a debt to be paid for the cost of our arising.

And Christianity, through the Paschal mystery and through the interpretation they've put on Christ, makes this beautifully clear.

There is a debt to be paid, and if there's one thing Christianity does for better or for worse, is to keep this idea constantly front and center in people's minds.

And I think that's a very, very powerful and important reality.

As I've said before, if you take away that idea, if you take away what's called atonement, you collapse Christianity into a bland, cheery, entitled, privatistic kind of religion.

Where God is just your big buddy who's looking out for your investment portfolio.

And without going too far, I think that this sort of frightful epidemic of lack of either public or private conscience, which has just run rampant in our planet today, is directly attributable in huge ways to liberal, progressive Christianity.

Which in the effort to try and make people feel good and less threatened and less scared by God and safer in their skin and all those little things, took away, while taking away the ugly saber-rattling of fear and punishment, also took away this notion that there is a cost that you must pay.

And if you fail to pay this, you fail to be a human being.

Because you're going to be stuck in your own little spiritual materialism agenda, trapped in that cocoon of kind of metamorphosing the caterpillar, without ever realizing that it has to turn into a butterfly.

And that the only way it's going to turn into a butterfly is to die in its cocoon and come forth.

And the only way you're going to die properly is to die in the act of giving yourself into something that you trust is larger.

And when that message drops out, you've lost the one remaining thing that distinguishes human intelligence from artificial intelligence.

The presence of conscience.

And so I think it's really important, and I mentioned on Tuesday that one of the most important things that we got from the Gurdjieff work, that gives it a good, strong, fresh dough to sound, to come back to this question, is Gurdjieff's absolute insistence that there is a cost of our arising that must be paid.

First of all, to pay off the debt of our own arising, what was invested to get us onto the planet.

And then, in this beautifully mysterious phrase, to lighten the sorrow of our Common Father.

And I think that it's here that you want to take your dowsing rod and say, "This is the living water," and start to reconstruct from that, in order to lighten the sorrow of our Common Father.

So for me, and I've really been working at this, I would say, for 50 years.

It's my whole journey.

And what I'm going to do today is essentially review some of the high points in my own discovery of what this means.

The usual mistake that Christianity has made for 2,000 years is to stick the blame entirely on human beings.

And the scenario is that God made it real, God made it good, God made it perfect, and then the first parents that were created, like Adam, Eve, boom, human beings.

Those two people screwed up.

And in the classic sort of codependency that we have out there, it was Eve that was the one that did it, but it was the Adam that was the one that was stuck with the guilt for it.

So that was the way that we told the story for so long, that the debt had to be paid because God created everything good and perfect in human beings through their willful disobedience.

Screwed it up.

And somehow, whether you make God angry and pissed about this, or whether you just make him sad, but nonetheless, bad karma was created and now it must be paid for.

But it sticks human beings with the brunt of this.

And so of course, as we looked at before, that's why the church got so jittery beginning in the Renaissance, when scientists began to chip away at the foundations in which this fairy tale made any sense at all.

And first of all, when you discovered when people like Copernicus and Galileo began to take apart the flat earth cosmology that that theology rests on.

Already the church was, "I don't know about this."

And then, man, when Darwin walked onto the stream, followed shortly by Teilhard de Chardin, and the idea that, well, you can't really have a primal parents that sinned, because human beings are the result of billions of years of evolution in which the same processes that caused the fall of Adam and Eve are already visible in the cell.

Read Beatrice Bruteau.

It's a brilliant thing that out of these basic motives of self-definition, by having decided, if you're going to be a cell, you've got to decide what's inside you and what's outside you.

And you've got to be real, real careful about letting things inside you that might harm you.

And so she points out brilliantly how these proto-movements at the sort of sub-sentient level that allow evolution and allow materialization to lurch forward are the very stuff that many, many niches down the evolutionary chain will show up as human sinful self-will.

But they have their biological and geophysical antecedents in the basic stuff by which form can emerge out of formless to begin with.

It's brilliant.

And Beatrice nailed it better than anyone I've ever seen in her book "God's Ecstasy."

But it's there anyway.

So what Teilhard was saying was simply that the principle of complexification and consciousness was around long before you got Adam and Eve and apples and fruit trees and Satan crawling on his belly like a snake.

So just to begin with as a little footnote and subtext, the story is perfectly real and valid in the mythic structure of consciousness.

And when I talk about the mythic structure of consciousness I'm not talking about some more primitive level of consciousness that we've now happily transcended.

As Gebser points out, these structures are always there.

And that was the point that Jung rediscovered so profoundly that these stories furnish a whole beautiful template of how you look inwardly and how you identify pieces of your own impulsivity with stories in history.

And so the whole biblical narrative is really a kind of macro-Rorschach in which at any given point you can find yourself, recognize yourself, see your own actions and relate it to a planetary history.

So it still works brilliantly there.

And saying that Adam and Eve were not historical people in any way devalues that.

As a matter of fact, for me, it intensifies it.

Just like Jonah probably never lived.

But Jonah and the whale live every day of my life.

How many times do I deliberately walk away from what I know is required only to wind up in the belly of the whale and finally get spat out when the whale gets sick of me?

So, yeah, all true.

But to try to make it the foundation to create cosmological history is stupid and dysfunctional.

And so people steadily since the Renaissance have been throwing out the baby with bathwater just because the church insisted that you couldn't have the baby without the bathwater.

So there we're stuck.

So the nasty secret for me that everybody is still trying to protect and that got Teilhard exiled when he dared to raise the question that Adam and Eve had antecedents, they may even have been monkeys, you know, God knows.

Remember the Scopes monkey trials?

You know, that's what was at stake.

You know, the sixth day of creation was at stake in this.

And the terror of the literal evangelical mind that if you throw out Adam and Eve and if you replace it with evolution and something like a documentable time scheme that you've lost the whole basis for justifying the story that human beings screwed up a perfect creation.

So my question is, why are we so damned attached to that story in the first place?

And what if the cost of our arising was not exclusively on our shoulders but was actually part of the cosmic cost of the arising of somethingness out of nothing?

In other words, that the originator, if you want to put it this way, of what would wind up as human sinful self-will is God.

Well, the first person to actually raise that seriously that I ever found was Jacob Boehme.

And I remember hitting Jacob Boehme in about 1993 when Rafe tossed his book on that Paulus series of spirituality, Jacob's Approach to God.

And I sat down reading it with the same kind of dutiful way you read all these sort of spiritual classics.

So, okay, I'm about to be enlightened through these and those.

But I looked at it and I said, "Holy God!

Is what he's saying what I think he's saying?"

And when I saw, "Yeah, it is," I proceeded to read everything Boehme wrote.

And it came to Boehme in basically a vision, a revelation.

He was this dreamy-eyed German carpenter or a shoemaker who was sitting there one day just sort of gazing at a pewter pot not knowing anything.

And all of a sudden he said, "The floodgates opened."

And he knew more in 15 minutes than if he'd been at a university for many decades.

But he had this vision of how somethingness can emerge out of nothingness.

And it's really an interesting archetypal variation on what would be called probably 50 years after Boehme, maybe more than that, I haven't double-checked my dates, but it would re-emerge in the scientific realm as Bernoulli's principle.

That in other words, if you want to make something flow, you have to put it under constriction.

That wide beds in the river, there's not an awful lot happening and you float around and have a picnic, but if you come towards the narrows or into a gorge, all of a sudden the water starts rushing.

And his beautiful revelation was essentially that God had to use something like Bernoulli's principle to begin to set the process in motion that would result in weaving somethingness out of nothingness.

And for me it's just artfully simple and beautiful and substantiable all the way up and down the chain that Boehme recognized that formlessness is a steady state.

It has a strong inertia towards just remaining formlessness.

There's nothing inherently natural in formlessness that would make it accidentally morph into form.

That there has to be something that creates the conditions within the divine structure of being that allow this to happen.

And Boehme was skating right along the edges of the first thing that God had to do in order to begin this process of creation was to create the Law of Three by dividing himself into three, an affirming and a denying and a reconciling.

The original dakhloim for those of you who are work nerds and know the terminology.

But that's what he's actually picturing.

You know, 200 years before Gurdjieff was born, he's picturing the genesis of the Law of Three, the division into three forces and then the interweaving of them in a way that all of a sudden starts creation.

And it starts deep in the marrow of divine omniscience and will.

So what he imagines is he says, "Well, if you're going to start bringing somethingness out of nothing, where do you begin to work?"

And he says, "The only thing that the divine being," we'll call it God now just because it makes it easier, but you all realize that that term is hideously premature at this point, that the only thing God has to work with is will.

And so the way he kicks the whole thing into motion is to take the divine will, which in the steady state is spread out in impartiality, objectivity, you know, easy, equally distributed over endless nothing, and begins to compress it into craving or desiring.

And when you bring will together around a tightening point, that's how it takes shape.

You know this in your own life, don't you?

That how does craving begin in you?

It's when you put and attach an object to this kind of restless energy in your own being.

"I want that.

I want that."

Craving.

And so the first step is to turn will into craving by putting it under pressure.

And as this happens, and Boehme pictures this just absolutely gorgeously, it gets more and more frustrating because there's nothing to slake the craving on.

You know, "I want, I want, I want, I want, I want, I want!"

You know, this devouring hunger.

And yet there's nothing out there that can possibly satisfy it because nothing's been created yet.

You've probably known this too in some of your worst wrestles with desire and craving.

That sense of it's an insatiable fire that's just going to fry you alive from the inside.

So this were the elementary cosmic emotions.

And he set up at this point an affirming and a denying, right?

Because the affirming is the yearning, yearning, yearning, yearning, yearning.

And the denying is, "Well, there's nothing out there!"

And so it gets more and more and more intense, the friction between them, until there's a spark.

And the spark quickly turns to flame and the flame quickly turns to light and something's there.

The spark is the beginning of holy reconciling that grows out of it.

And it's also, in a very interesting way, the beginning of consciousness in sentiency.

The principle that allows you to say, "Oh, I'm miserable!

Ha ha ha!

I'm suffering!"

The birth of consciousness as the original third force.

And it's out of this that you finally got the threads working and it's amazing to see it.

I'm not going to push that further.

I mean, I will be reading that as long as I can read and think.

Because it just...

I look at it and I say, "Holy God!

The scale of the thing!"

And it makes sense right down the scale.

I can find that in my own life.

I can find that in my own backyard.

That it's stamped in everything.

And stamped in the Buddhist things that says, "You know, if you want to evolve, you've got to sort of transform craving back into something more impartial."

Yeah, John?

I don't want to take this off, but in reading Boehme, I was struck by the seven forces.

I can't even remember the language.

I'm thinking Law of Seven.

I mean, he did the whole thing.

He just saw it in his mind's eye.

He did the whole enneagram, the Law of Three intertwining with the Law of Seven, and when creation comes out it's in seven stages.

He didn't read Gurdjieff.

This is like archetypal truth that everybody gets a piece of.

But for the point of view today of where we are headed, it says basically that there is a cost to be paid because the cost of arising is born through all the worlds, right back to the holy sun absolute.

It is not attributable to something as ridiculous as a human being eating an apple.

It begins in fear and trembling in the very conditions that allow something to emerge out of nothing.

So it's born along the whole ray of creation and ultimately the heart of it lies in the abyss of God.

And Boehme himself says that you can't go beyond this.

He asks the question, "Well, what made God decide to want to bring form into existence?"

And this is a really important question because in it you will find the meaning and purpose of your own life as you play with this.

What made him want to do this, to put it in anthropomorphic language?

And Boehme simply called it the scientia, the knowing.

You know, scientia means science but the root word is the knowing.

So there was a knowing deep within the abyss of God that this was necessary.

And I think that the knowing was--and this is where Cynthia Bourgeau 101 begins to enter into where I took it-- the knowing was that if God knew I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known, and so I created the worlds visible and invisible, that the knowing then is that the treasure at the heart of God, the secret, the scientia, requires both form and the formless in order to manifest it.

It's not something that exists a priori in the formless.

It's a whole greater than the sum of its parts in that it's somehow brought forth in the dynamic reciprocity between formlessness and form.

And the place where I've taken this--and people will either say, "God, she was right, another Boehme," or else they'll say, "Jesus, what an idiot."

You know?

Time will tell.

But my insight on it that I haven't been pried loose from in 20 years is that agape, love as we know it, does not exist a priori in God, like all the stories tell us.

God is love.

Not so.

You can't find that.

When energy starts to flow, it manifests first and foremost as eros, craving, with all the pain in it.

And agape, love, is an alchemical product.

It's the fruit of the transformation process that goes on between craving, eros, and kenosis.

Remember A=EK by my t-shirt?

That agape is generated when craving is finally transformed in the willingness to surrender and give back and emerges.

And as I've said before, I think this emerges in the Ray of Creation, right there in that epicenter there with world 24, world 12, and world...

So that arrows comes down as craving, desiring, and is transformed in a beautiful way, and in a particularly powerful way, in human consciousness.

We have to dance back and forth, one foot in the finite, one foot in the infinite, one foot in the imaginal, one foot in the muck, and somehow become transforming machines in our life.

We're going to, in every direction, either go devolve or transform and offer up.

So for me, what I wrote about Christ and the sacrifice when I had to do this in 10,000 words or less In the Corner of Fourth, I wrote "Because the conditions here are hard, God sent his only son to accompany us, to shield us, and to gentle our path so that we do not despair.

The conditions must remain as they are, but we do not bear them alone, and Jesus' willing kenosis on the cross furnishes both the model and the sacramental foretaste of the transfigured love that awaits us in full, as we too become capable of such depths of self-offering.

All things in the created order begin in fire and end in light, teaches Boehme.

And as we are willing to entrust our lives to the alchemical fire, pain is not an opposing force but the ground of motion, the first step in a journey whose ultimate fulfillment is the redemption of all things in love."

And so that basically is where I place this triduum celebration that Jesus is speaking to and comes in the presence of the fullness of time as they use it here, to validate and in a deep way to line the conditions here.

Saying you can't collapse it.

People say, "Well, why doesn't God just take away pain and darkness?"

You can't do that because then you violate the essential conditions in this irrevocable Law of Three dynamism that is moving its way towards the fulfillment of love.

Boehme saw that too.

God can't just wave a magic wand and say, "Oh, you're all exonerated.

Get about your business."

Or we're right back at our game of raping the earth and building subdivisions.

It's that we all have to do the risking, the immolation of our wills for the alchemical birth of our hearts.

And because that's hard, what we're doing is ritually playing that out.

And you've got to get the place free.

You've got to get the piece in place first that this is substituted love, intentional suffering, not victim.

It won't play on victim when you've got an angry God nailing us under the cross and saying, "To hell with it."

It's because a supremely free human being knows, sadly, that this is necessary and is willing to step up to the plate.

So, that's been my revisioning.

It yields a whole different flavor to the suffering.

And it brings a real sort of holiness to what's going on today.

It's not just our ritual wringing of our hands about this poor innocent man that died.

But it's the look at the scale of the wonder of things as Eros times Kenosis produces an alchemy.

So, I want to add to this a couple of pieces that come from, respectively, Rahner, Teilhard, and Ladislaus Boros, all of these 20th century Jesuit theologian visionaries, mystics, that really fill in some details on this and talk about, essentially, the Harrowing of Hell.

Which is what's going on while you're all out tomorrow morning flying kites and shopping and looking at stuff.

It's what's going to be celebrated in the second vision.

That, first of all, Boros pointed this out really carefully, strongly, in his book "The Mystery of Death."

That in classic Christian systematic theology, right along the way, it is Jesus' death that is the saving moment.

It's the viaduct of how his alchemical sacrifice became active in the world.

Not his resurrection, as everybody's happy to think.

They say, "Well, if there was no resurrection, the death would have been a write-off."

That's true in a way, but it still gets the point that in a very, very real way, it was the moment of death that activated the actual alchemical process.

That changed the substrata of the earth and initiated this new possibility.

Boros' "Mystery of Death" is an extraordinarily closely argued, tear-your-hair-out, tedious, Jesuit scholastic treatise on why this is so.

But if you catch what he's saying, it has profound implications, not only for Christ's life, but for your own.

And starting from your own, he says, "Well, what happens to people at the moment of death?"

And he says that there are two things, and he works this out in the whole first part of his book.

I don't know how many of you have read it, but I think that all wisdom students need to have worked through the Mystery of Death before they leave this planet.

The first thing that happens to you he calls "ontological exposure."

All of a sudden, your first body, small self, and the ego that goes with it, the camouflage you've used all your life, gets ripped apart.

And he says, "This is a real death, your first body."

He doesn't use first body language.

He never heard of Gurdjieff for sure.

But he's essentially saying, "If there's anything remaining of your first body, it's going to be carried in your second body.

But your first body as an entity is done.

And what this creates is a disruption in your whole being.

It's like suddenly, if there's any conscious sentient you left at all, it's already completely lost its center of gravity.

It's out in the world.

It can't hide anymore.

All those persona, all those 987 I's that it used to get by in life, gone so.

And what's revealed is just the core, bloody, newborn essence of who you are and were maybe all along.

So this is a moment of, he says, "It's a real death."

Because the relationship between your first body and your second body, again not using these languages, is a real relationship in your life.

And as we begin to work here, pouring from one to the other, you'll see that's so.

You'll begin to discover that your first body is not some idiot device that hides you and destroys your spiritual progress.

It's the real instrument, the sacramental instrument you were given to be active and empowered in life.

So trashing it won't work, and when it gets disrupted, there's grief.

So he makes that clear.

But at the moment it's just like anything else that's had the scab pulled off it.

And all of a sudden there's a revelation, an epiphany, such as never happened before.

So that's the first thing.

There's this intense vulnerability, exposure, and transparency, and grief.

The second, he calls, a soul becomes pan-cosmic at that moment.

And he says that we often have the opinion that when people die, they're now removed and we can't find them anymore.

And he says, "Not so.

They're actually closer than everything, but they just go live everywhere."

And I think some of you may have had that experience.

That in a sense, when a...

Boros called it a soul following classic Catholic theology.

So when a soul is released from the body, it doesn't become less accessible.

It actually becomes more accessible if you're tuned in such a way that you can pick it up.

That's what Jesus had to teach poor dear Mary Magdalene in the garden on Easter.

He's standing there right in her face, but she's, "Where's his body?"

Where's his body?

I've got to fix his body.

I want his body."

And she's like, "Maria, hello.

I'm not a dead presence.

I'm a live absence.

But here I am."

So the trick is that I think for most of us, in order to meet and be intimate with beloveds that are no longer their first body, we have to be in our second body too.

And as we learn to do it, it's a slam dunk.

These people that have lost their body are not gone.

And you can, as Gurdjieff taught us in the pouring exercise, you can pour beautifully to one that you still want to work with that's no longer in a first body.

So you begin to learn that.

You become pan-Cosmic.

And that's a tool for yourself now and for your work, your redemptive work with loved ones that are gone.

Redemptive work with loved ones that were never born.

I mean, I think many of us know children that died in the womb or early in childhood, or children that we never had in the first place for various reasons.

And some pathways I know that people in celibate vows often experience great grief about progeny never born.

But even so, we can work.

We can work.

But it's second body to second body.

You get a little grace period if you haven't really worked this way, because the dead hover so close in those days right after death.

And our yearning for them is so strong that a lot happens in that field.

But you can stabilize that work if you're willing to.

Anyway, without going further down that track.

So what happens then when this happens to Jesus in his death?

Imagine at the moment, and Boros talks about it, when Jesus, that explosive force that had been Jesus, confined and camouflaged in a single human being, peeking out around the edges of the transfiguration, his first body is gone.

Instantly, ontological exposure as the essence of who he was becomes visibly apparent, escaped from its can, as it were, and then quickly pan cosmic and enters, infuses everything, like the perfume that fills the whole room with the fragrance in that Magdalenic story in the Anointing.

And we saw that in that tale of the centurion, at the end of the cross, when Jesus dies, the centurion who's been hired to guard him says, "Truly this man was the son of God."

What did he know then that he didn't know five minutes before?

He caught, like, see what happens when the candle is sniffed out?

The fragrance that arises, he caught and witnessed Jesus now pan cosmic, changing the foundations of the earth.

"Truly this man was the son of God."

And Rahner was the first one to pick up that what we've been translating as "he descended into hell" is really translated and visible in the Gospels as "he descended to the heart of the earth."

And to dear Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, we owe the beautiful vision that the heart of the earth is not some sort of metaphor floating around, you know, that he's floating around in some sort of somewhere.

He says, "You know, let's think about the geosphere, folks.

Let's think about an absolute little center of the planet and let's think about that what's being said here is that his being, his pan cosmic being, saturates our world, mi, mixus orbis, as it's called in the great chain of, with a new quality of redemptive love, with a quality of mercy.

Saturates it, slightly changing the conditions at root at the heart of the earth so that we don't struggle so damned hard on our own.

So that any time we try and we say, "Damn it, I'm just going to do it.

I'm just going to wake up.

This one time I'm not going to aid and abet my personal programs for power and happiness.

I'm going to use the material of my life in a different way."

Any time we do that, we experience the cosmos as lined with help pouring toward us.

Any time our hearts are so broken that we can't get up, we'll sometimes find in the middle of it this little ray of mercy that lets us somehow miraculously get up again and take the next step.

This is what we mean, the heart of the earth.

And as Jesus is down there in these three days of the vigil, just sitting, not doing anything, no wands, no abracadabra, but just impartially witnessing and holding that it must be the way, it must be, and that love can be made whole, spun over the entire megalocosmos.

It must be.

We must, in this way, be in the conditions as they are.

But holding that in the impartial love that in itself slightly shifts the mix.

And so we don't forget that.

While he's doing whatever he's doing in the heart of the earth, there is Mary Magdalene, topside, whose love is sufficiently strong that after you've seen your beloved carried off to the grave, what are you going to do?

Go home and watch football?

I think not.

I mean, any of you who have ever lost anything, including a pet, know that the place you feel the most comfort, the most closeness, is to stay close to the grave, the last place where their earthly remains are concentrated, and heaven and earth aren't going to move you away from there.

So, she's holding the vigil at the top.

And without either one of them ever specifically intending it, because I don't think either one of them had ever read Gurdjieff, she, nonetheless, they are forming a human bridge of love across the realms.

A bridge which is both a sacrament and a model for all of us, a transmission.

So that too will be available today as we do the entombment ceremony.

You'll watch in this beautiful ceremony what happens when the wrapping of the body happens, when the laying in the tomb happens, and the beloved, who has no place else on the earth to go except to where love burns the strongest, stays there as the witness.

And as I call it, it's the falconer holding the falcon, as the falcon swoops in the underworlds to restore the conditions of the earth.

Jesus, the original Catskill Eagle, eh?

So, those are some of the things that are on my mind and heart, and a crazy deranged mind as we go into today.

But I invite you to ponder or seize any of this or none of it, but to let it flow into your own sense and take of what this day is, and this passage that is strangely intensifying across the world as the day moves on.

And where are we now?

Definitely Iceland is into it.

Actually, we've lost a lot of them.

They've already gone to bed.

But we're doing our watch.

Okay, with that in mind, any questions, comments, reflections before we break?

[Question] Where do I start reading Jacob Boehme?

You know, my very favorite book is his "Forty Questions of the Soul," which you'll find on my shelf in your Andrew-like way.

But there is a...

The usual starter series place, and I think it's a good one, is it's a book in the "Paulist" series on spirituality.

I forget what it's called, but it's also on the shelf.

"The Way of Christ."

Yeah, you're right.

Thanks, Joan.

And so it's...

That's a good one.

That's the one that Rafe tossed to me.

So there's where I go.

I also have an article that I wrote that you can dig up on the internet.

I wrote it in 1993 or so for DOSIS, or 1994, somewhere in there, called "Boehme for Beginners."

It might even be on the Wisdom Waypoint's website.

[Question] Yeah, it helps to orient that, and then you can go back and work your way through "Forty Questions of the Soul."

He's got a little book called "Clavis, the Key," which is only 48 pages long.

But he really very succinctly lays out the major pieces of his theology.

It's not really a starter book because it takes too many big leaps at once, but once you begin to work with the pieces, it just sort of puts them together like a key.

And the thing with Boehme, which is funny, is that...

Boehme started a whole line of people that followed him, but his first translator into English was this guy by the name of John Sparrow.

Sparrow just sort of voluminously translated Boehme, and still when you're buying the books, if you want them in English translation, you'll bump into the Sparrow facsimiles.

You can get them from Kessinger Reprints.

It comes right up.

And they're good.

I mean, they're very, very 17th century English style and pomposity, but Boehme desperately needs someone to go through the whole canon and do a modern version of it.

But not in my lifetime.

So those are some starting gates if you're interested.

Yeah, Rebecca?

[inaudible] Oh, yeah.

Yeah, the Holy Trinity and the Law of Three.

I've got some... [inaudible] Good, good. [inaudible] Yeah, yeah, right.

Because most of you have the one that was published in America with the blue cover, and I got the British original, and so it's got a pretty heliotrope cover that I'm quite fond of, because I don't lose it.

But yeah, it's the same one.

Yeah.

You've got it, yeah.

Isn't Ephrata Cloisters outside of Philly?

Oh, yeah.

It's really worth a visit if you ever in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Yeah, nobody is ever going to be in Littitz, Pennsylvania by accident. [laughter] You have to kind of make an intention.

But it is absolutely extraordinary and worth a visit.

Boehme sponsored a whole bunch of people that were the wisdom schools of their day, and the community that founded Ephrata Cloisters was a Boehme community, essentially, a couple of generations down the pipeline.

And I met Ephrata Cloisters long before I'd ever heard of Boehme or Gurdjieff for any of these people.

I just walked into it because I grew up in sort of that corner of Pennsylvania, and I went, "Holy God, what in the world is this?"

It's another--you know, you can still feel the vibration.

So if you ever get down there, look it up online, and if anything stirs you to go to Littitz, Pennsylvania, you'll have-- [laughter] If you're driving west on Route 80 going home, don't miss it.