



# FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

SEPTEMBER 2019 • THRESHOLD CROSSINGS

We begin September with profound gratitude in our hearts for our recent gathering, *Embracing the Future / Encuentro con el Futuro / Pagyakap sa Hinaharap*, a celebration together with our Sisters from both far and near! Gathered as Adrian/600 strong, we welcomed each another, renewed old friendships, and forged new ones. The joy we shared was both palpable and memorable!

With the lighting of the sacred fire of Divine Love, the Christ Fire, we entered into a prayerful ritual of praise as one voice. Sister Patricia Siemen welcomed us all, especially our Associates and Co-workers in attendance and assured them of our desire to deepen our partnership with them. Later on in the week, we celebrated a special ritual of loving remembrance at our circular cemetery for our Sisters who have gone before us, and who now accompany us as our silent witnesses.

All our invited speakers spoke profoundly of our current reality of people everywhere who suffer from dire poverty, deep-seeded racism and daily acts of violence. We addressed the need for care for Mother Earth, who suffers from the effects of climate change. Each day served us as “a threshold crossing” guiding us into the future, deepening our trust in God’s faithful love for all who yearn for hope and justice.



In small groups, we shared a word(s) that best expressed our dreams. Gathered together into a Wordle (image above), our dreams that mattered most to us were identified with bold emphasis. Take a moment to reflect on our communal Wordle that spoke so deeply of our hopes for the future.

- What word(s) did you share?
- What word(s) surprised, delighted or challenged you?
- How does our Wordle reflect deeply our dreams for the future? What prayer or phrase expresses your hope for the future?

Share your reflection, prayer or insight with a friend or in a group.

Our *Encuentro con el Futuro*, a celebration of our lives, calls us to live in right relationships together with all of creation. May we embrace our dreams to work for prophetic justice, the promotion of health and well being, and the care for Earth’s capacity for sustainability and resiliency.

# CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING: HELPFUL GUIDELINES

At the heart of contemplation is the awakening to the presence of God in the human heart and in the universe. A community gathered in contemplative sitting is grace flowing for the community, for the church, and for the world.

To begin a contemplative sitting or meditation practice, you may find it helpful to:

- Find a space that calls you into quiet (light a candle or play a chant if it aids stillness).
- Set a specific time for your sitting: 5, 10, 20, or 30 minutes.
- Set an intention for the session, dedicating it to a situation, a person, or a quality needed to grow in our world, such as truth, justice, peace, forgiveness, or courage.
- Become aware of your whole body as you enter into the silence; follow its rising and falling as you breathe in and out. You may wish to say *In* as you breathe in and *Out* as you breathe out, or repeat a mantra, such as “Holy One” – breathing in *Holy* and breathing out *One* – or “*Maranatha*” (Aramaic for “Come Jesus”).
- Gently note each time your mind begins thinking or feeling or planning – and gently bring attention back to your breath or mantra.
- Give gratitude to yourself for the time you dedicated to contemplative sitting.

It is important to remember that contemplative sitting is not about achieving a particular feeling or experience. It is simply sitting in God's loving presence, coming into present moment, calming the mind by following your breath in and out or repeating your mantra. Contemplative sitting is an encounter with God in the midst of our daily lives.

– Esther Kennedy, OP

*Esther conducts a monthly Day of Mindfulness at Weber Center.*

