



Hermit Wisdom

Prayers for the Middle of Everything

A Gift from A Single Thread from Ko Den Ku
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To Spiritual Aspirants Everywhere

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What When I Do It Leads to Eternal Well-Being?

When I pay attention to the Truth.

I am of the nature to grow old; there is no escape from growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill-health; there is no escape from illness.

I am of the nature to die; there is no escape from death.



WAKE UP!

Life is transitory; swiftly passing by.

Be aware of the Great Matter.

Don't waste time.

What Uncovers Infinite Compassion in My Life



When I pray.

May I be happy.

May I be free from stress & pain.

May I be free from animosity.

May I be free from oppression.

May I be free from trouble.

May I look after myself with ease.

May all living beings be happy.

May all living beings be free from animosity.

May all living beings be free from oppression.

May all living beings be free from trouble.

May all living beings look after themselves with ease.

What Leads Me to Prayer



When I am willing.

May I have a willing acceptance of the small seemingly
mundane task that this present moment puts before me.

K. Rahner

What Leads Me to Know the Subtle Source



When I remember.

Delusions are not real.

Delusions are not personal.

Breathe and continue through the day.

What Leads to God



When I sit still.

I know that I sit in the presence of God.

Everything I do, say, think, feel is done in the presence of God.

What Leads to Daily Calm



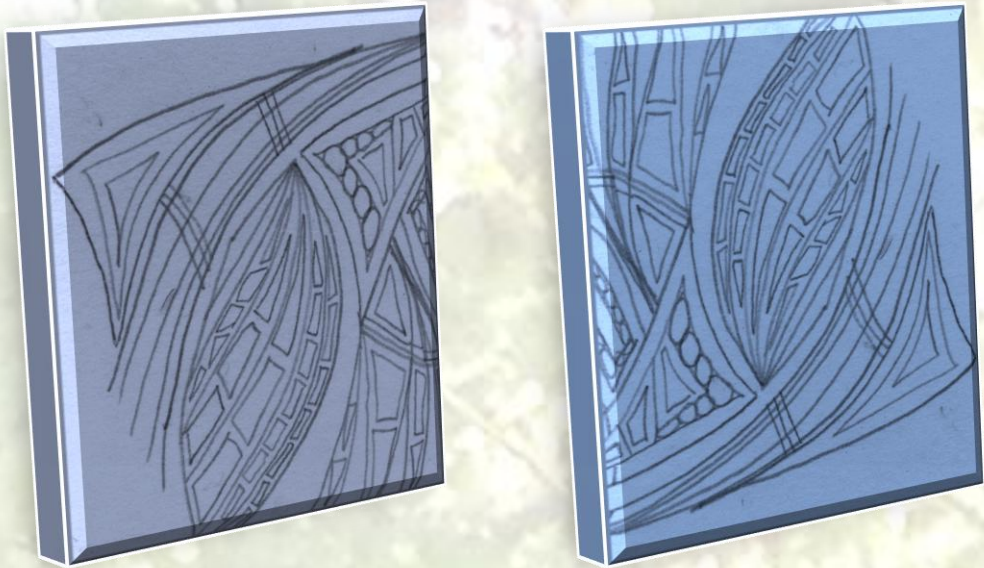
When I begin with my hands.

To do the unending tasks.

When I do not look toward the end of any of them.

When I am with what is at hand, in my hands.

What Leads Me to Rest



Knowing that what comes into my life is my life.
Let it go without a plan.

What Leads to Infinite Compassion



When I come out of myself and see I am not my body,
not my thoughts, not my feelings.

A Prayer for this Very Day



I offer the work of this day.

In this very day, everything is just there on its own.

In all its own shape and form.

I am mostly blind to it.

May I see it in what is just there.

May I meet what is just there.

*What Leads to Knowing All Things Are
Perfect Just as They Are*



When I stop measuring.
When I refrain from looking for more or less.
When I stop looking for praise and glory.
When I look for the changeless nature in everything.

What Leads to Knowing My True Nature



I take into me all failings and faults in vows of awakening and awareness.

The virtue of keeping these holy vows I give to all beings in their everyday situations.

I wish them the strength to vow with a pure heart and mind without a whiff of failing.

May all beings know infinite compassion right where they are.

What Leads to Letting Go of Suffering

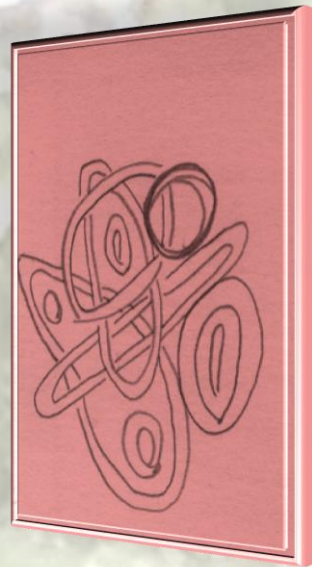


When I uncover the statue I call me.

I laugh and let it go.

My true nature is always underneath what I build.

What Leads to Rest in Eternal Well Being



When I know...

My many identities block my awareness of the subtle source
that is clear and bright.

I do not change them, make them better or worse.

I let them go.

What Leads to Finding the Eternal

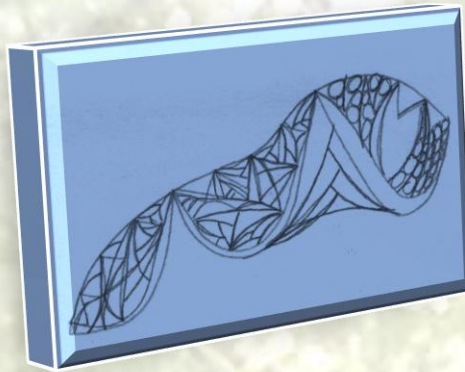


When I stop my judging mind.

When I draw no conclusions.

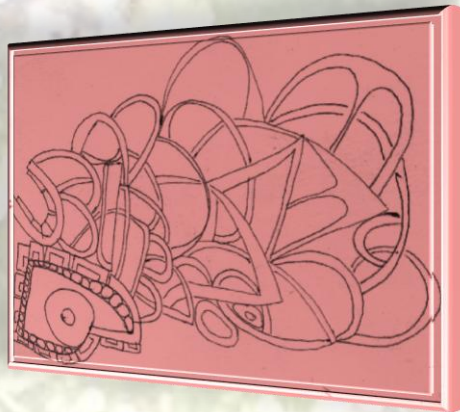
I rest in the vast, inconceivable source that cannot be faced or turned away from.

What Leads to Recognizing Delusion



When my thoughts fall away.
I look through the noise in my mind.
I don't know what each day brings.
Something always shows up.
Speechless messengers.
I let them be.

What Leads to Acceptance



When I know everything is a message.

When I receive what comes into my life as my life.

Nothing is left out.

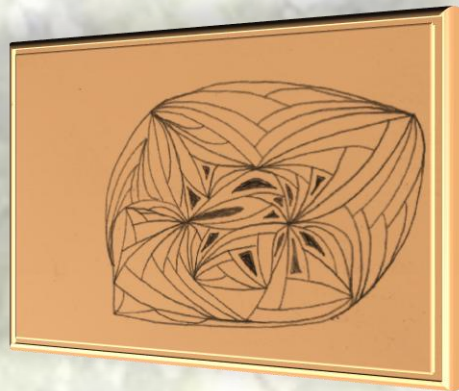
When I know that nothing is perfect, everything is just right.

What Leads to Unbreakable, Immeasurable Life



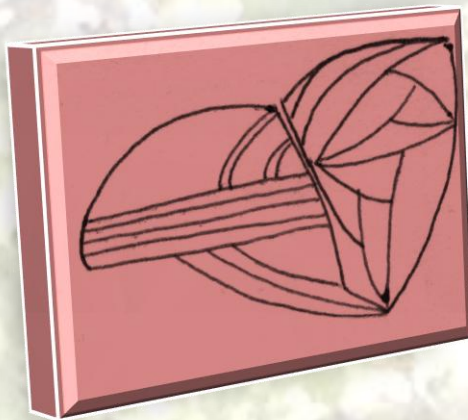
When I seek the unbreakable, the immeasurable.
Not the constructs in my mind.
Not my wish to see the wonder of life.
Life is unbreakable and immeasurable can I bear to know this?

What Leads to being Present with the Eternal



When I turn away from the fleeting world and look for the presence of the eternal in every action and thought.

A Prayer for My Thumb Tips



In the winter the skin on the tips of my thumbs gets dry and cracks. It is painful as a paper cut is.

My hands are in and out of water. I work with bleach, ammonia and vinegar. It takes effort to tend to my thumbs.

I wrap them in band aids. I rub cream on them. I think these things are the answer.

I want to go back to not having to tend to my thumbs.

I only tend to them when they are a problem. I do this with most things.

It takes effort to tend to what comes into my life when they are not a problem.

May I take the effort.

What Leads to Seeing the Eternal



When I stop arguing with what is.
I cause myself trouble when I try to divide things up.
I cause myself trouble when I get in the way.
I make trouble with my small-minded ideas about things, about
vastness and the inconceivable.

What Leads to Clear Comprehension



When I slow down.

In each moment of activity and silence there is the possibility to know the eternal nature of a thing.

So often, I hurry through to get to the next thing. I think there is somewhere to go and something to get.

I think I can finish.

The truth is I am there already with everything completely.

In each moment there is the possibility to know the eternal nature of a thing.

A Prayer for Giving Up Delusion



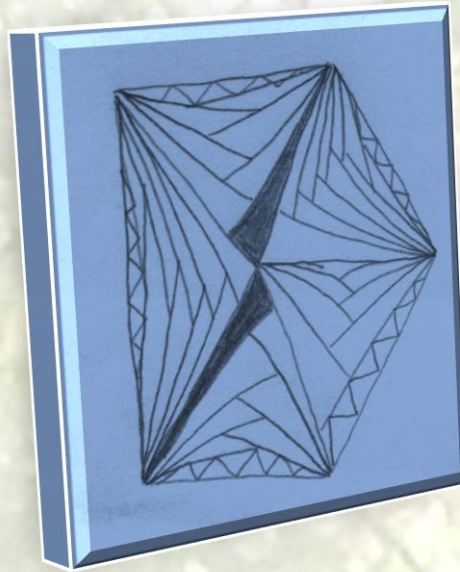
May I find my feet right where I am.
Virtue holds me up on my feet.
But it easily disappears as I try to get something other than what is right here.
When I am ready I let go of the delusion and begin the climb.
May I lift my foot up and set it down.
May I lift my foot up and set it down.
May I lift my foot up and set it down.

A Prayer for Hearing the Call of Godliness



May I drop the burdens of responsibility.
Responsibility is laden with self wishes, I hear nothing else.
May I devote my energies to the absolute and hear the call of godliness.
And may I respond.

What Leads to Eternal Well Being

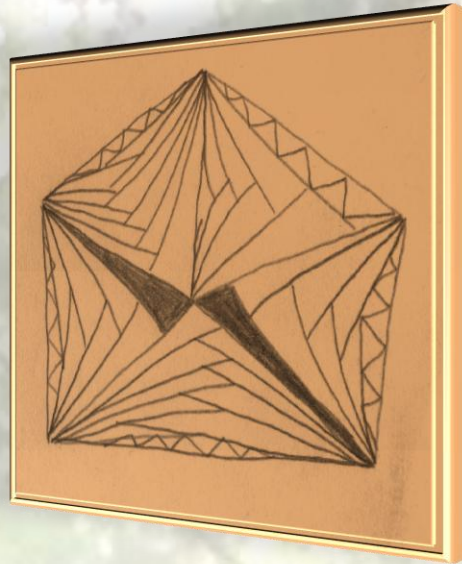


It's when I do not look backwards.

It's when I do not look forwards.

It is when this work right here turns into devotion.

What Leads to a Timeless Awareness

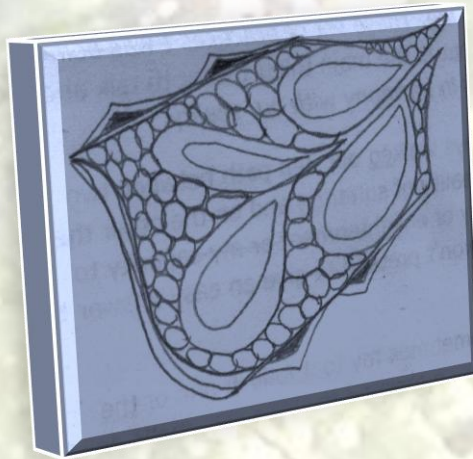


When I consider mistakes.

When I am deluded I make the same mistake over and over again.

When I am aware I make a new mistake every time.

What Leads to the Divine



When I am internally grateful.

No matter where I am or what is happening, I am thankful

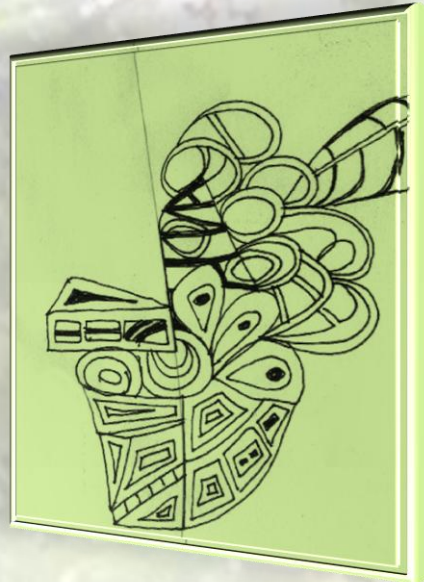
I experience eternal well being beyond the sense doors.

What Leads to a Timeless Awareness



When I know my limits.
I stop pushing and pulling.
When I do things without strain, awareness is just there.
It is always there, ready to lead me.

What Leads to Leaping Clear



When I trust and go with God.
When I drop the many and the one.
When I stop dividing and measuring and continue
with what is right in front of me.

What Leads to Non-Me



When I know I am not in charge.

My **ME** gets in the way.

My body needs constant care and I begin to believe I am responsible to get things done.

When I seek no result and know I am not in charge I cultivate goodness without a worry for me.

This requires practice every day, all day long.

A Prayer to Know Eternal Well Being



May I let go of the clock.

May I direct my day from within and forget the demands of time.

May I stop the harassment of agendas.

May I know that when I know nothing ever gets done I join the moment.

What Leads to the Silence of Unknowing



When I enter my day slowly, carefully.
It is easy to forget. And when I forget, I enter the day as
something to be gotten through...
I rush to get to tomorrow or next week which I make better and brighter.
When I hurry I lose every little inch for the sake of a mirage.

What Leads to Letting Go of Hundreds of Years



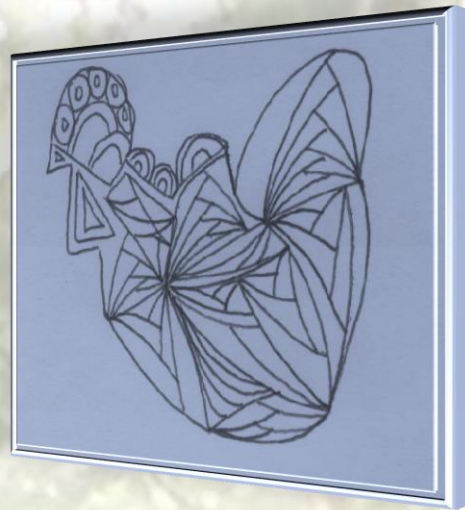
When I pry my mind off a thing.

Habits are things set in mind cement and are sometimes difficult to recognize.

When I see them my work is to pry my mind off of the habit.

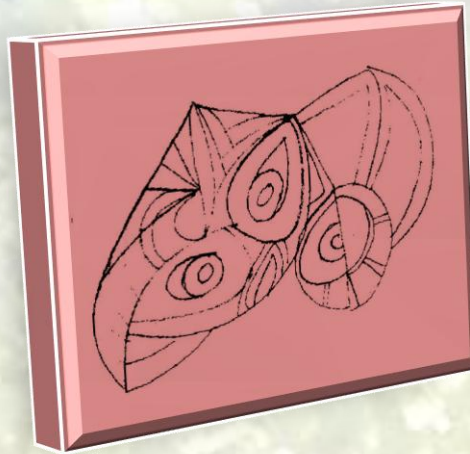
I need a suitable place, a suitable way to allow the mind to let go of what I like and yet is hammered in.

What Leads to Pure Being



When I don't run ahead or hide in the past.
Just begin right in the middle.

A Prayer for not Judging by any Standard



May I draw no conclusions.

When I notice conclusions forming I see the subtle desire to want things my way.

May I return to being with things just as they are.

The mind window clears and judgments fall away.

A Prayer for What Leads to Solitude



May I step away from the routine and set down the familiar.

May I stop talking and work at letting mind chatter come to rest.

What Leads to Solitude



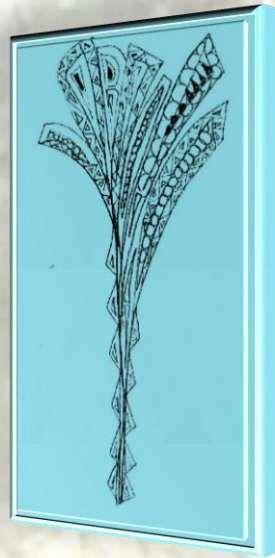
When I follow a schedule that is not too tight, not too loose.

When I move through the day without a plan and allow the schedule to lead me through the day.

I find God.

I go with God.

What Opens the Door of Solitude



When I pay full attention to whatever I do

The door of inner solitude opens when I don't chase the result.

If I begin to plan how to get to the end..."if I work faster then..."
the door of solitude slams shut.

The slightest bit of chasing closes the door.

When I return my attention to every little bit, everything turns out just as it is.

A Prayer that Leads the Way to Silence



May I find my way to right here.
The easy part is just not to talk.
Being alone makes this very easy.
The hard part is to silence the mind of endless judgments and conclusions.
And then, there are endless memories and plans.
May I find that this present moment is silent.

A Prayer to Hear the Silence



May I notice the power of looking at the "next thing" to do.

This power pulls me into an imaginary dream.

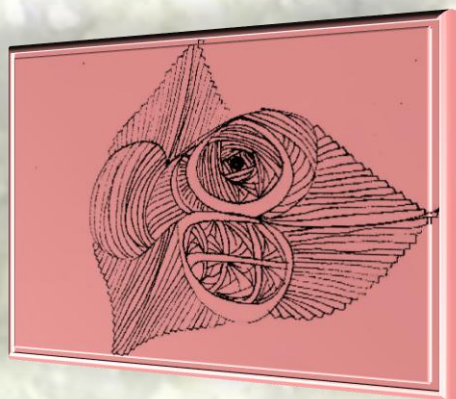
I rake leaves, my mind chatter starts and I begin to lose the leaves from view and begin to see my plan for the next thing.

I return to the raking. I return to silence until memories pop up.

And then I lose my place right where I am and I find I am in the past. I struggle to let go of the sticky, dead things. I recite a chant. I struggle. The noise is endless.

Just watch the noisy clouds come and go, come and go, come and go while I rake and bunch the leaves and put them in a bag.

A Prayer to Find Silence in the Sounds of the Day



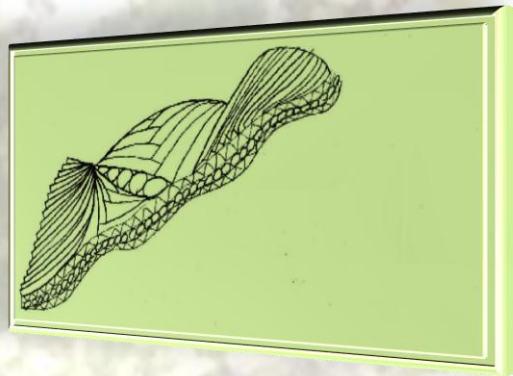
May I stop the worry.

Last night I found worry and difficulty. I found disturbance in the wind and the crickets. I heard the branches brush against the hut and found banging. I found worry where it always lives, in the future

I found discomfort in the misbehaving sheets. They wrapped around my legs. The bed hardened and I was anxious. I found it easy to lose my way in the tangle in my mind.

May I stop the worry.

A Prayer to Remind Me to Practice



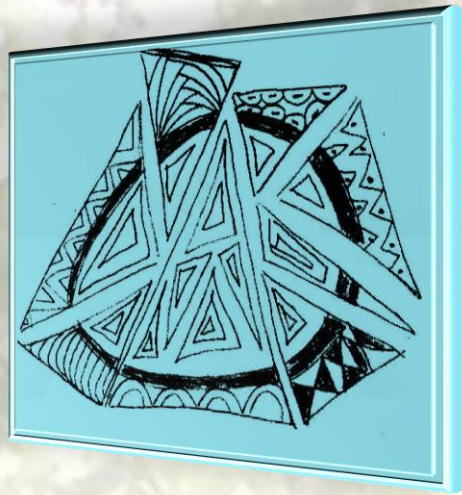
May I begin on the wings of intention.
I intend to do just this one thing.
It is so easy to slip into planning while I work.
I renew my intention throughout the day.
May I intend to do just this one thing.

What Finds Silence



When I know silence is not missing or hiding.
I look at the small things, I concentrate.
I moved rocks today. I lift and move.
I didn't rush to finish. I find great joy with each one.
My mind stops chattering and looking ahead.
A day is too long, too big for the mind.
It's crossing the bridge before I get to it.
I stay with each rock, each one.

A Prayer to Let Go of Mind Chatter



May I not make a home for mind-chatter.
Today I listened to the chatter.
I took the boys for a morning walk and felt the coolness of the morning.
It took me back to Colorado, to the mountain air.
But I didn't stay there long.
I listened and continued on the walk.

A Prayer that Leads to Intimacy



When I rely on impermanence I am intimate with what is.

While I was eating I got an itch on my shoulder. Usually I'd scratch the itch. But I decided not to scratch and went on eating.

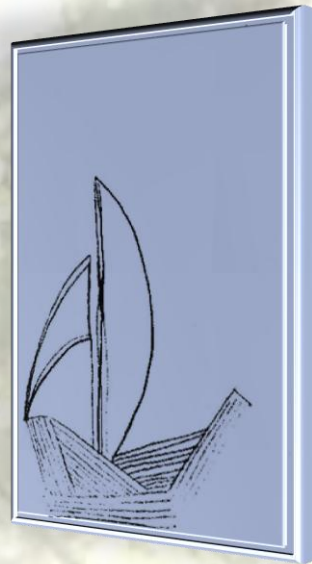
Mind chatter is the same.

A thought, judgment or conclusion itches and I scratch it. But I can decide to continue on with what is right in my hands.

Everything is empty of anything solid.

I am intimate with what passes through and continue on without any burdens. I am never apart from this.

What Leads to Rest



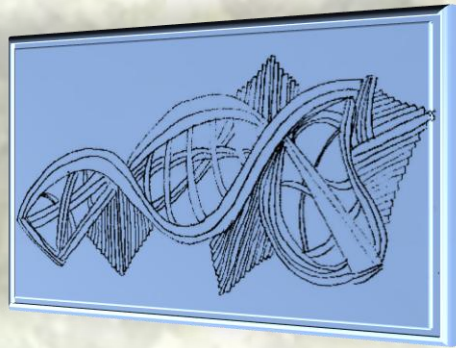
When I work without thinking that what I do is valuable and lasting.
It frees me from clinging and I am able to rest.

I focus on lines from a chant...I've built a grass hut, where there is
nothing of value. After eating, I relax and enjoy a nap.

I no longer look for a result.
Looking for a result brings anxiety, judgment and fears.

I return to work without the stamp of VALUABLE.

*Eyes see, ears hear, nose smells,
tongue tastes the salt and sour...*



Sometimes I do not notice the world I am in.
I look but I am not seeing.
I hear but I am not listening.
Sounds have their own unique quality.
They don't clamor to be identified or judged.
Birds sing, crickets chirp, the train crescendos.
I spend time outside and the mind chatter quiets down.

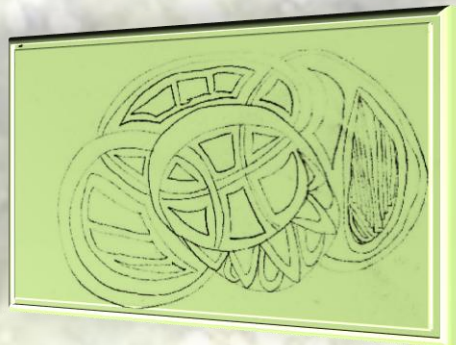
The Subtle Source Is Clear and Bright



And I keep forgetting this reality.
God does not need any offering from me.
But I need to offer everything to God.
It helps me to remember and look for the subtle source.

I offer my vision, my listening, tasting, touching, smelling
and thinking in every moment.

*By the Virtue Amassed by
All That I Have Done...*



It may not look like it, but everything I do is of God and for God.
Habits of mind and body steal my knowing this through the day.
I put my mind on something other than God.
I get lost in confusion. I rely on habits rather than God.
I get defensive or hurt, tired and fussy.
And yet the virtue gathers.

*If You Do Not See the Way, You Do
Not See It, Even As You Walk On It*

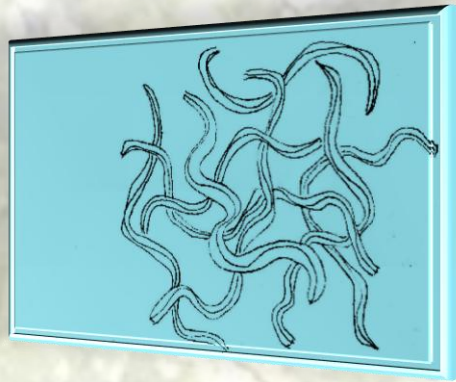


Today seems a clear day.

At various times I paused and felt great gratitude for things just as they are.

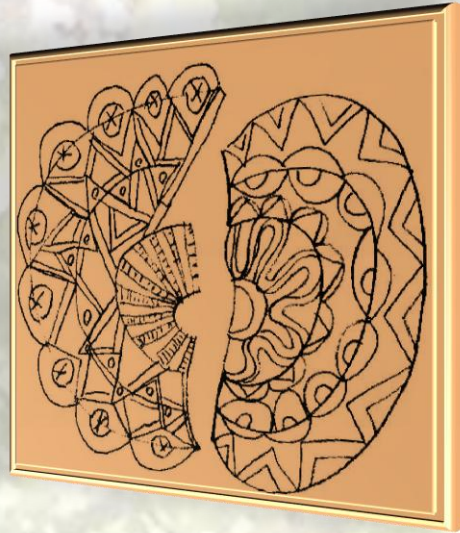
In the middle of the night, I was reminded that I am not in control -- such a relief!

Let Go of Hundreds of Years and Relax Completely



Ah...to be able to let go of wanting it to go my way.
To let go of wanting to be seen as a delusion of perfection rather than the delusion of a schmuck. Somewhere in all of this delusion is the real self. I get caught in two fantasies, the "GOOD" and the "BAD." I can and do kind things and I can and do mean things--neither is to be held onto. And yet, I drink the sweet and bitter waters without complaint. I taste the in-between, the uncomfortable space. Not solidly good, not completely forgiven. No longer holding, the tastes drain away. And when I let go of hundreds of years, I relax completely. The never disappointing way.

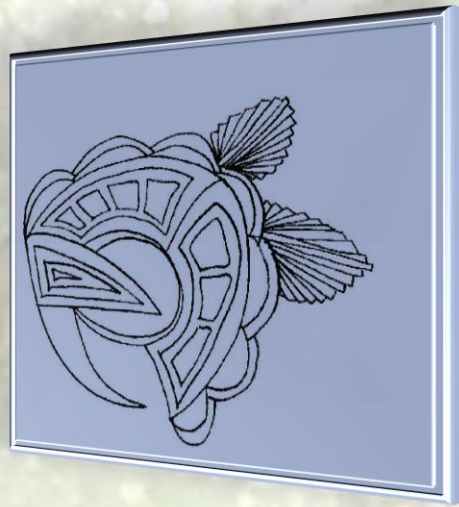
Cracked Open



And so Jesus tells Nathanael... if you follow closely after me,
I will crack open your mind and heart, your very spirit to the active
presence of the living God. Fr. Anthony Celrich

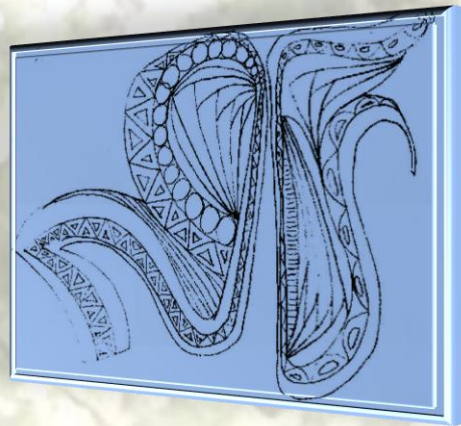
What a promise!
I will follow closely this day.
May my mind and heart be cracked open to the presence of God.

Not Thinking OR Thinking?



Try it.
Just step back and look.
See for yourself. Just step back and look.
Unh...Unh...Unh...Unh
Try it again. Just step back and look.
If you must give it a name, call it Non-Thinking.
Step back again and look.
Do this continuously.

To Be Content Is Not Easy



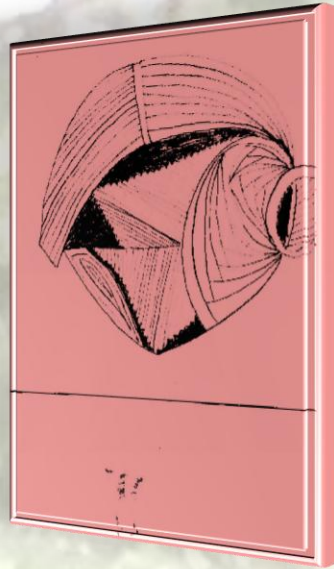
Sit in your cell as in paradise. Put the whole world behind you. Realize above all that you are in God's presence. Empty yourself completely and sit waiting; content with the grace of God.

Writings of St. Romuald

To be content is not so easy--likes and dislikes seem to appear out of nowhere. Followed by opinions and judgments stamped "I AM RIGHT!" And all of it in less than 10 seconds. Sweet one you have forgotten where you are and with whom you are sitting. For just a second, breathe with the countless breaths all around you.

Be content, it is not different anywhere else.

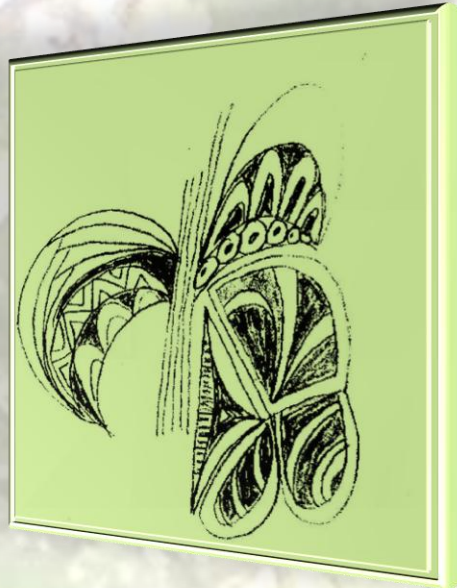
I Don't Know Where My Attention Is



Fire is hot.
Wind moves.
Water is wet.
Earth is hard.
Eyes see.
Ears hear.
Nose smells.
Tongue tastes.

I know these things and yet, I go through the day "not knowing" where my attention is. Is it in the past? In the future? Judging? I lose my attention. It's a wild thing. It runs after things blindly. I bump into everything. Like a puppy, I need training to stay, sit, lie down, eat and drink. When the senses calm, I just live.

I wonder Why I Can't Remember




Whoever seeks God must accept discipline.

Sirach 32:1

OK. I get it. I hear ya! It's difficult because I fall on and off of the path of discipline. A schedule, a routine, set times to pray and meditate are helpful but there is something else. What is it?

It's about being a disciple inside where the will and motivation rise. The will needs conversion. And the schedule, routine, set times soften the will to accept willingly and completely the path of a disciple.

It's not something old or ancient. It's not to follow the footsteps of ancient sages. It's to seek the Beloved in all things.



It's to forget the self and not the Beloved. It requires kindness and patience for every moment. Attention! Attention! Attention! STOP hurrying. Don't give up!

Do You Want Peace?



Peace requires practice.
Practice no harm.
Practice humility.
Practice speaking lovingly.

Today, I practice standing up straight when I walk.
I will not slouch when I sit. I will pay attention and not wander off
in my mind.

I will be the one washing my face and brushing my teeth.
I will meet each creature with kind words.
Happy, happy greetings.

Fields of Emotional Energy

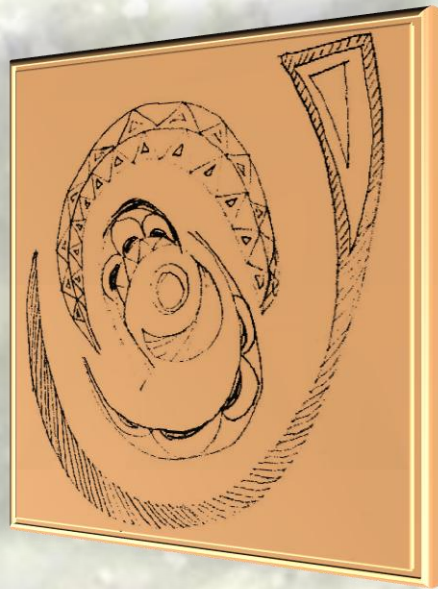


Every day we walk into and through fields of emotional energy.

May I learn not to pick up unnecessary energy and may I live simply not going after more than I can use.

May I know how to live simply, with senses calmed, without being jealous and carried away by the emotions of others.

*Don't Do Anything that Brings
Disapproval from Wise Beings*



It's difficult for me when I am stuck in the material world.
The material world covers up wise beings, wise-seeing, wise-knowing.
It's because I get unplugged thinking in dual ways: you and me, them and us.
I want to know the wise beings inside, outside and in-between.
There are no merits or de-merits.
There are heavenly guardians, lovingly surrounding all of us.
They guide me wisely when I listen.

What Leads to the Path of Attention



Let no one do harm to any being.
Let no one put the life of any being in danger. This seems like an easy
practice--yet, harm travels around with me all day long.
I am not careful in what I say and am short with others.
I say things without care and quickly leave a harmful wake.
I want things my way and don't see the other. I don't see the harm.
And then suddenly I am reminded and I return to careful attention,
coming back again and again.
Sometimes it takes a yell, an "ouch," a painful reminder.
And I remember.

Nice Thoughts



Just as a mother loves and protects her only child...We should cultivate boundless love and offer it to all living beings.

Nice thought, isn't it?

How to do this is more complicated. It's a life-times work.

Start with your own mind.

What can I do today to protect my own mind?

I can be aware of what comes into my life.

I can bring the mind back to safety each time it heads for dangerous territory.

And do this again and again and again.

This Jewel



*I rise from this jewel flower throne and sit upon it
every day along with all of you: it is just that you
avoid what is right in front of you.*

Instant Zen

I contemplate it -- I'm surprised that I do not see what is right in front of me. The fog of thoughts, opinions, and judgment is so dense. I can't see through the fog.

I make up "real" stories about seeing what is right in front of me. Oh how complicated I make things.

Everything Comes to Awaken Us



See everything that comes into your life as a moment to awaken you whether you like it or not.

Many times I do not like what shows up and I want something else. I don't want a hot flash in the middle of the night.

I don't want the dog's scratching for reasons I can't figure out.

I want everything to be settled. I don't like it when I can't figure out what I want.

I don't like to be uncomfortable for any reason at any time.

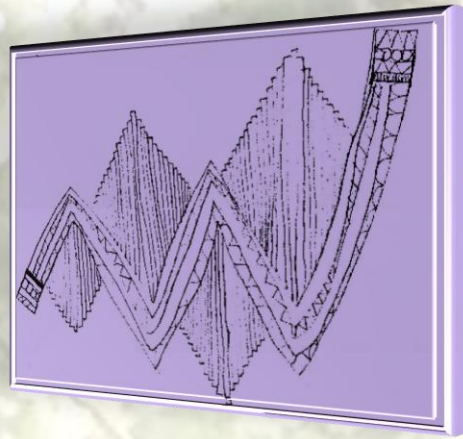
All I know how to do is recite a memorized chant to rein in my "don't like, unsettled, out of control" mind.

Perhaps, I could make friends with what I don't like. Invite it in rather than argue with it. Maybe I could begin to welcome everything, whether comfortable or not, as a moment to awaken.

O to be joyous that I am able to see the uncomfortable and comfortable as a moment to awaken.

I forget it's not personal, it's practice.

Everyone Included



May every being be happy and safe.
Everyone being is included.
No being is left out.

Being a Disciple

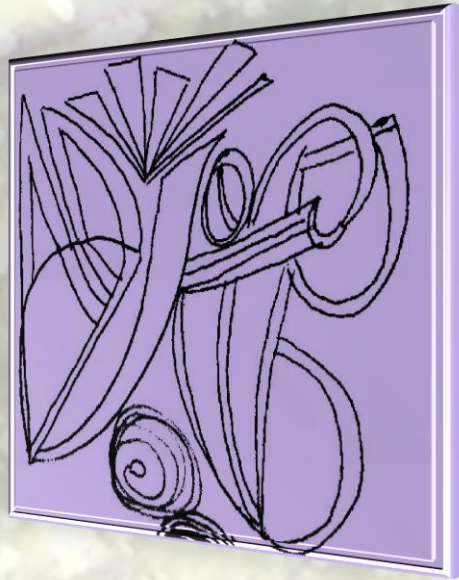


"...The person who hears the call to discipleship and wants to follow, but feels obliged to insist on his own terms...but then discipleship is no longer discipleship but a program of our own to be arranged to suit ourselves.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer Cost of Discipleship

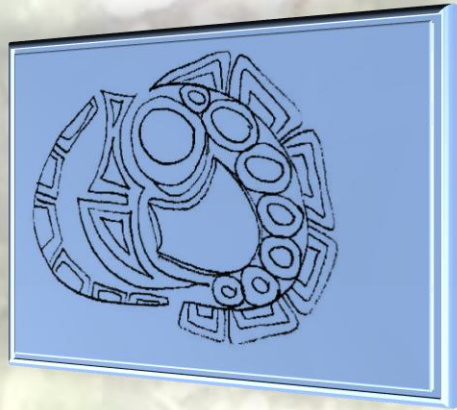
It is so easy to get caught in insisting on my own terms.
The delusion of RIGHT and WRONG, MY WAY or THE HIGHWAY is no longer discipleship.
Freedom is found in discipline, not insistence on my own terms.

Right Now, How Can You Avoid Being Oblivious or Excited?



Composure is the place of awareness.
It is neither dull nor excited. It's a steadiness in the mind.
Dullness and excitement are agitations in the mind.
One is a slimy cover, the other blowing gusts of wind.
Go below these irritations and rest within yourself in the presence of
your divine nature.
Practice deep diving right in the middle of the slime and windy
irritations.

Where Are You Going?



To an unchanging place. If it is an unchanging place, how could there be any going? The going is also unchanging.

Instant Zen, p.83

Some days I think I am going somewhere, as if there is some place to get to, a better place than here.

I don't realize that even while I am going, God, the unchanging, is with me.

This is so. I just don't think it is.

*Nothing Is Perfect, Everything
Is Just Right*



I can think the "truth" of this saying. Knowing it is very different.

I drove a man with renal cancer to a doctor's appointment and it was hard to understand how his suffering is just right.

The U.S. is considering bombing Syria and Syria allegedly used chemical weapons. How is this just right?

One who is awakened sees with the eyes of the Beloved.

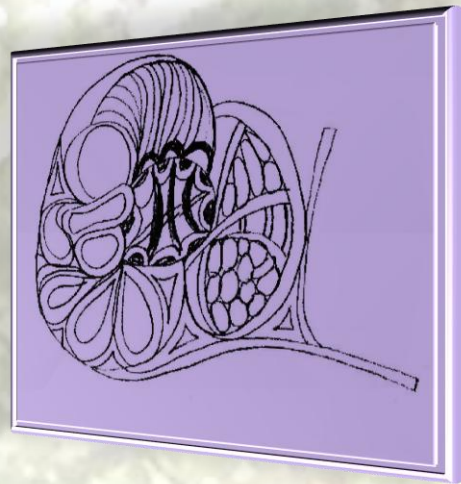
To see the Beloved in everything is just right.

Do Not Be Alarmed, Do Not Hammer to Fix



All day long, I find things to fix, both literally and mentally.
In silence and solitude I am just with what is in front of me.
No longer fearful to "get it right" or pushing to "fix it" my way.
What a relief.

*For What We Are About to Receive,
Let Me Be Truly Grateful*



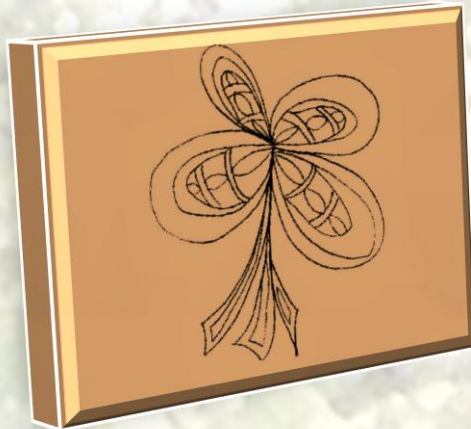
I am mostly grateful for pleasant, happy things.
I don't see pain and anxiety as something to be grateful for.
This means I don't see beyond the black and white world of good
and bad, right and wrong.
I don't see them as possibilities of awakening. I strike against them
and burn myself.
I do this again and again.
Let me see through the burning self.

It's Not Personal



I wonder how many times I think it is personal.
I'm irritated when someone swims in my lane in the pool at the Y.
I'm irritated when the dog paws my bare arm, I respond with
impatience to his insistence to go for a walk.
My thoughts are personal, aren't they?
I have a way I want things done. I can hardly imagine the
"personal" dropping away.
But when it happens, there is ease.
Who is the one who is trying to outsmart the truth?

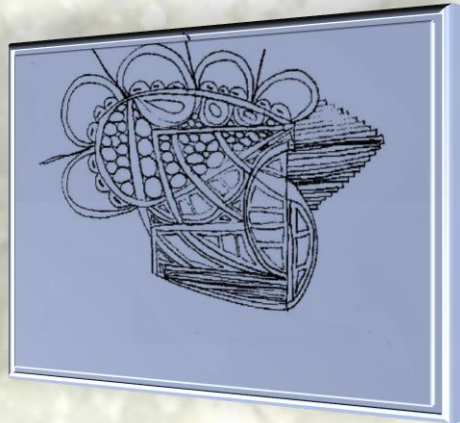
A Washing Machine Prayer



My prayer for this day --- **A Washing Machine Prayer**

As I use the washer, keep it clean and wiped down.
I am thankful for the soap and water.
I am blessed by the fragrances and churning waters.
I feel the spin of the tub.
The clothes damp against your belly.
I lift your lid and find a job well done.
Thank you, O old washing machine.
You teach me.
What you do, you do it well.

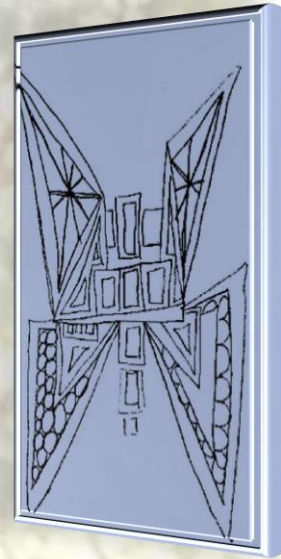
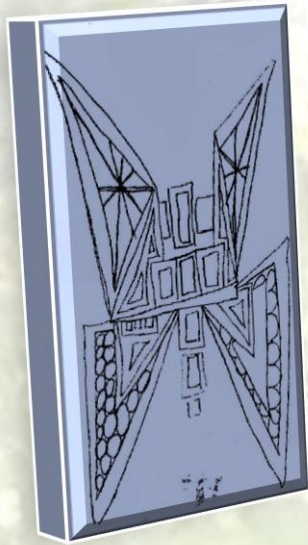
A Bed Making Prayer



Bed Making Prayer

The sheets and blankets get twisted and rumped in the night.
In the morning, I pull and stretch each one.
I smooth and straighten.
They do not complain; these guardians of warmth and comfort.

A Window Washing Prayer



Window Washing Prayer

Before I wash the windows, I see the dust and oily film.
After washing, the window disappears.
The light was always there.
I didn't notice it.

A Prayer for Cleaning the House



Prayer for Cleaning the House

I enter with love and care.
O house, you shelter and protect me.
The clutter piles up and you ever complain.
Cleaning transforms clutter.
Never completed, this creation of peace and calm.
No hurry. You are so patient.
You teach me patience.
Cleaning love.
Cleaning, love.

A Prayer for Grocery Shopping



A prayer for grocery shopping

We reflect on the effort that brought us this food and consider how it comes to us.

O fruit, O vegetables you give yourselves freely.

You are available in such abundance.

What a holy offering!

You are good food that helps my body.

A Prayer for Folding Laundry



A Prayer for Folding Laundry

The clothes come out warm and fresh from the dryer, waiting their turn to be smoothed and folded.

Usually I want to hurry and get to the next task of living.

In the warmth, the creases, the wrinkles and needs may I see peace.

Amen.

A Prayer for Projects



Prayer for Projects

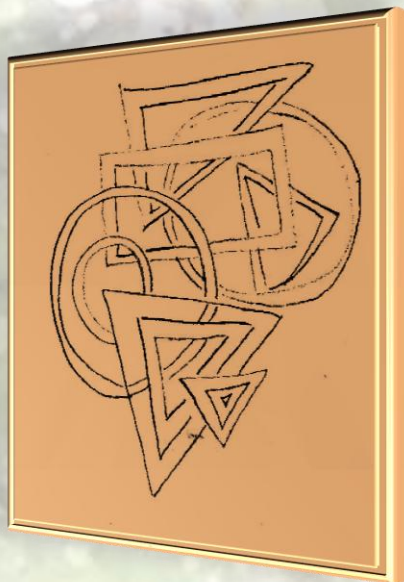
I bless the tools they come to help in the work this day.
Here you are ready to serve with no complaint, no pushing
to be first or best.

Let my work reflect the peace of these tools.

May the concentration of the work carry me through.

Amen.

An All Day Mantra



Do not presume. It's not personal. It is practice.
Breathe.
This is an all day mantra.
There's no hot water to shower with after my swim.
I still haven't heard from an expected visitor.
The pups don't settle down while I am writing.
None of this is personal.
My ego-self does not need to grab it.
No fixing it.
No judging.
Just breathe.
Do not presume.

The Way of Water



We often do not get what we crave, we do, however, get what we need to awaken. It's not a puny "self" craving, but something that goes beyond words. When we are able to open in this way, we begin to shed the shackles of suffering. We study the things that blind us in order to see them as blocks against seeing them as a way to wake up.

We think we are in control.

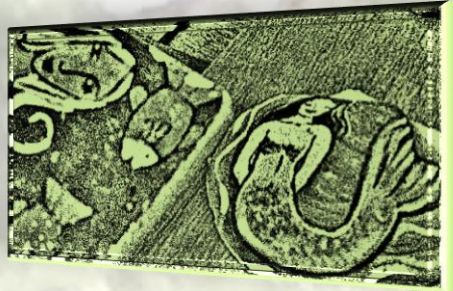
We attempt to arrange life the way that we think is comfortable and not the way to liberation.

We need to follow the way of water.

Water takes the shape of the container; water in a lake is the shape of the moving waves.

It's not something to pretend but to know.

Our Senses Are Not Powerful



In the mundane world, where everything is material, we place meaning on things. It's what makes them valuable.

In the spiritual realm, everything is valuable, everything is of God.

The material world does not make sense because it does not match our wishes.

We struggle with just about everything.

It's because our senses are not powerful. They cannot find meaning.



