

Lyn Mathews
Temple Collegium

SPIRIT EXERCISES

Feb. 19, 1973

We- are moving into a very exciting week, And I think a very productive week for the future, & in that we are going to be dealing with spirit methods. And that is a subject that you and I know a great deal about, and we have been ~~examined~~ experimenting with spirit methods for a good many years. And I do not know how you have been---stood present to our collegium sessions this quarter; but I have found taking one theme and sort of putting it/~~in~~ into the center of the week and then coming at it from three different ways on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday has been most helpful in just sort of exploding my imagination. You will recall that the first week/~~we~~ worked on Penetration, the second week on the Local Church, then we moved to the Whistle Points and then the Guild and then the fifth week our order and then last week we worked on the new sociological/~~forms~~ forms of the church and this week spirit methods and next week we will just push on ~~to~~ to raising the head-on question,~~which~~ which we have been dealing with all quarter, as to what Summer '73 needs to look like.

Now in this week with the spirit exercises, we need to begin by saying that the spirit exercises are nothing in and of themselves--that we do not do the solitary office or engage in the corporates/~~for~~ for our own--- shoring up of our own psychas or of accumulating some kind of virtus. But those exercises ~~that~~ that we do only ~~is~~ for the sake of that last fat lady. ~~Through~~ That through those exercises we may stand as those people who can be the instruments of bringing life to the last fat lady.

And you see in the twentieth century, Chardán has reminded us (or I wrote somewhere --we have got it on a brochure, I know) that the twentieth century will be

remembered as the age of the consciousness of consciousness. Now what we are

quite aware of ~~that~~ is ~~that~~ the fact that consciousness/is breaking loose in ^{which} its our time will not reach/~~ix~~ full ~~fruit~~ fruition save there are religious exercises which ^{kind of} ~~that~~ allow you and me and the last fat lady to appropriate the/consciousness

that is present in the twentieth century. And, as I said, we know a great deal

about this, but we have to find new ways, new containers for what the spirit

exercises hold this kind of consciousness. Ann was talking this morning in her

witness about ^{just} just the well-spring of resurgence that is/bubbling up. Every time

we see it in our own order, when we go out to teach a course, we see just that resurgence that is taking place. With the question, what kind of container, what kind of new wine skins/~~is~~ that resurgence going to be poured into?

Well, we had ~~that~~ begun many years ^{, I think probably back} ago/in 1967, to just sort of

~~we~~ catch us up on our history a bit, ^{in working with the} ~~the~~ spiritual exercises. In

marked ~~was~~ 1967 that/~~was~~ the beginning of our experimentation with the solitary office.

Up to that point in our internal life we had collegium~~s~~, we had divisions and

and we had division~~s~~ meetings; then our internal life--we were ordered into commissions--

we had the economic ~~commission~~ ^{commission} and the political commissions and the (?) popular

commission and that was/the way we were structured/~~internally~~ ^{sort part of} internally. In 1967 we lauched

our first college experiment and we had---that was the beginning of the spirit

exercises because in the midst of that in that year we had the solitary office.

Those were very wild times in the solitary, as I recall. We did all kinds of

crazy things. And I remember the most humiliating, crazy thing that I ever got

caught in ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~
was when Beverly Bazanson, now a Mrs. Phil Smith somewhere in Australia,

who taught at Leif Erickson School, brought her high school, the principals of

Well,
Leif Erickson School to college. That week we had postures and gestures.

You would get up and go like ~~xxxx~~ this, you know. And that week of ~~x~~ all weeks

the gesture was prostration on the floor. And it would have been one thing, you

--like in
know, to have been in a huge/~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Thomas A Becket, was it there? Where, that

I mean But I mean,
wonderful scene, where all the men prostrated--well/that was beautiful. /~~xxxx~~ we

the time came for
had these tables, you know, and/~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the solitary and there we ~~xxxx~~ were

~~xxxx~~ lying prostrate.

(?)~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ under the tables/ Well, I mean, it took about three years to get back

footing
on some~~xxxx~~ kind of public relations/with Leif Erickson, and thought that we

off ~~xxxx~~ the beat , you know,
(?) were just/~~xxxx~~ then. And/it was just obvious that we had not

question
move into a time of practical thinking. (?) There would be no problem now, with

just anyone of ~~us~~ us dropping that out, if some one showed and we were doing that.

were
But anyway, they/~~xxxx~~ just a wild times in our life beginning the experimentation

of the solitary.

Now a with the scripture conversation around collegium scripture-news,

xxx an ~~xxxx~~
that is ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ an arena that we experimented with for a long time.

And in the Summer of 1970 our image there, that always sort of _____

_____ just in terms of _____.

--or--

Any way in Summer '70, we had/experimented with the spirit conversation.
just

And any of you who participated in that summer remember/the fantastic

happening that ~~time~~ was . I shall never forget doing one on pipes (?)

and Doug Drunkenmiller, now a prior at one of the religious houses, at anyway.

He told about standing on (?) the outside of a mountain ~~in~~ on a little
skinny ledge; and he is a great story ~~in~~ teller. And I am not kidding you,

by the time he finished his story it was awe as if/experiencing the vertigo.
we were

I mean, you were just up against ~~the~~ mystery itself. And that was the
summer that that whole methodology got launched. And then in Summer '71

used
we/~~did~~ the Psalms, and the canonical hours which--anyway. Last summer

what with our Other World charts, we initiated the visits to the Other

World and the great exercise of the Fast and the Ball and the Watch. So

Who knows what it is going to be in Summer '73? I guess that is one thing

in our working this week we have to be raising that question as to what is
the spirit exercis~~e~~ that the movement is calling for in Summer '73? So this

week we will be doing on Tuesday morning we will be ~~in~~ doing the solitary

practices and (if you will look at that chart) and imagine (?)
sort of the board work)

that
we will be doing on Tuesday morning the Solitary Practices and on Wednesday

~~morning~~ morning the corporate indices and on Thursday ~~morning~~ morning the Journey
in
of the Sanctities. And I think the chart/itself in its lay out is rather

That familiar because we have talked through and about this many times. The

knowing ~~is~~ is, has to do, just the knowing dimension has to do with meditation, and poverty, and the doing dimension with prayer and ~~and~~ obedience, and those ~~are~~ intensified ~~being~~ brimming up into contemplation and chastity; and I guess

that or I thought afterwards ~~that~~ it needed to have all the arrows moving in to

the int~~ens~~ification of chastity and contemplation ~~and~~ throws us into just the

transparency of being itself. ~~And~~

a bit

And so now let us just back up/and talk ~~about~~ about ~~each~~ each

that

of these. Oh, you will notice/at the top of the chart there is time and at the bottom of the chart, space. I don't know that---I do not--I don't have that

enough --- I not enough on top of that to push/~~it~~ too much; except to say

that the indices, the corporate indices, have to do with the stuff at the top.

The fast

~~is~~ is primarily time, that you are dealing with, or the ball or the watch .

And in the solitaries you lean more ~~to~~ towards space, Or just the raw liturgical in which

use of space itself. But ~~I~~ I think that is another arena/~~where~~ we can push

is in

ourselves this week/x the whole ~~exercise~~--the way in which the exercises deal

with time and space.

the

Well, in/solitary practices, as I already indicated, this is where

we have struggled the longest; and you know, the way that we talk about

Meditation, contemplation and prayer is that that is just human activity that

everyman engages in. I remember that about a month ago I was down in the Loop

and walking across the top of _____ and a taxi cab driver drove up

and he got out of his cab and he walked up to the Pacaso statue, he knelt on his knees and went like this, three times, got up and walked back and taxi- ~~HE~~ WAS got into his cab and drove off. Every body/standing there ~~was~~ gapping. I

finally decided what he was doing was his solitary. (?) Like ~~gapping~~ the Moslem shouts ~~xxxxxxx~~ six times a day, you know, the Moslem bows down six times a day.

The Moslem goes through the symbolic.

Well, in our time the secular revolution, the world that is living in revolutionary times, a world that is ~~just~~ gullible, demands ~~that~~ we bring into being a new

solitary office. (?) That is the new sensation of consciousness that is

happening in the twentieth century, is the consciousness of consciousness of

is that which the creation of consciousness, / That demands ~~the~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ a ~~new~~ symbolic life. For what you and

I know in our time is that we create our own consciousness; or to say that another way, we program ourselves. And that to just bring a radical/^{kind} intentionality on that is just a---is just crucial; or otherwise it is just a prey of those who have decided to program him. So that just speaks to the kind of urgency of experimentation that you and I have been about.

Now let ~~us~~ ⁱⁿ turn to the arena of meditation. Now that has to do on our charts with the waiting. This ~~just~~ is a chart that I didnt create...it comes from Summer '72, and I've had a hard time brooding about the poem dealing with ~~that~~ waiting under meditation. I was very interested this morning in our scripture conversation. That began to point for me to 'those who wait on the Lord'... that waiting has to do with ministering-to I guess when we stand present to the kind of tragedy and human suffering in our world and the necessity to care for and minister unto it, that there is a waiting for our community of saints to speak to us...I mean mainly for the _____ you know, who was listening

with his voice to come in and begin to inform us or speak to us as to what needs to come down, but that scripture sort of broke that open for us. Well, in the whole arena of meditation, we create our own ancestors, we create our own descents. I mean its that bit in Kazantzakis that's sort of corny and I can't remember it but I know that you decide which of your ancestors you're going to put into your community of saints and the others you stop down into the bloody mire. But we choose our meditative council. At one point we experimented in meditation with 7 personal categories and 4 special categories...and I tell you that was hard work because we had this big fat breviary, in fact, for those of us who've been ~~Wd~~ around we have file drawers full of different breviaries, for the solitary. We've done a lot of experimentation with just the _____. I think one of the most exciting was one where we had to cut out little pictures and paste them in for the contemplation part of it. Anyway, that business of the seven personal categories in meditation. One of the categories was organic and inorganic matter I remember. And by the time I'd sit down, I'd feel like little orphan annie! I didn't have any friends, because I couldn't remember them. Well there was _____ and Aristophanes, and I didn't know who they were, but I put them down! We've just begun to bring to consciousness the struggle that you and I have to be our own being, over against our utterly objective encounter with the mystery. That's what contemplation is all about...just the fear and fascination of the mysterium tremendum, that how do you get a container for that kind of an encounter with the mystery. Well, we say that with the Mystery you have to be able to see it, hear it, smell it, taste it, eat it, you know, all the senses. And we've worked with that with the incense. And I feel that's a whole arena that probably Western man in particular will have trouble just breaking through. Part of the trouble is that we're rational people, and language is our medium, and we probably have a lot to learn in this arena from toher urs. That's one thing that's just fascinated me about the rock music.

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I mean, that rock music is never played soft. It just blares out... and so that it's almost as though that noise gets internalized. Have you had that experience? Listening to that loud rock? Or these light shows down at these avant-garde theatres with all these lights going on? I mean you can no longer keep them out here...the experience is just interiorized. ~~One classic~~ the light, the experience in well how do we interiorize, in just working through the exercises of contemplation of all of the senses... One classic description we have studied several times in our history ~~is~~ of contemplation is Dark Night of the Soul. How in that act of the solitaries do we take just the separation which is just the encounter with the way life is. And the descent, which is just the breaking in on us of our own unrecieved past and our future which is just nothing out there. And then that Dark Night of the Soul, where I experience the fact that all of life, every last bit of it, is nothing but total chaos. And then the ecstasy, or the vision, where I see life just as it is, with not alteration, is good. Now, how do we get that kind of encounter with the mystery in the act of contemplation?

And then that prayer activity in which we _____ just the investiture of our whole life. Now, the Church has been experimenting with the prayer meeting. Just a secular kind of talking through the prayer meeting. And we've been experimenting with the prayer vigils. I guess Move 222 was the first prayer vigil that I can remember. That when we were doing Move 222 we stayed up all night for several nights and wrote prayers and that whole move.

Well, although we have struggled the most with the solitaries, somehow or other, it's still very difficult. But what we're beginning to see is until we get a handle on the corporate indices and the sanctities, we're not going to be prepared to go back and do that solitary. I can remember Kaye Hayes, I'm sure she's long since forgotten this, but she said one night, I need a solitary that I can do. You know? And that spoke to me.

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I want that kind of solitary too. Some very consensual something I can do while I'm walking down the hall. To remind myself.

Well, the corporate indices, having to do with poverty, chastity, and obedience. Someone remarked that the biggest job of the renewing of the local church is no ~~way~~ way to sustain people for a lifetime. I mean, you and I have to come off with exercises that have to sustain people for more than two years. I mean, it's a long march. It's a long pull. And what are those spirit exercises that will sustain you and me and our colleagues for a life time? This means, raising that question, that we work through the corporate indices, or the corporate sigh. The religious orders throughout history have been such corporate indices for the total church. I think that's the pain of the religious orders of their struggle now and coming out of the habit, and all of that, is that, is that they are no longer that corporate index. But what does it mean for them? The style of who am I? And yet, passionate engagement. Or to will one thing. And show the past of what we have. And I guess we'd need to say that ourselves, as an order, that we have been a corporate index to the movement of that style. And style and indices are closely related, if they're not even the same thing.

Well, under detachment, or poverty, detachment from the things of this world, or relations, finally our own spiritual virtues, we experimented this summer with the fast. And as an order, I guess, we have done the Fast once. And I think that's wise, you know. To me, playing around in this arena is like playing with fire. I mean, just raw power. Patience, that's fine. I mean, if it takes years to work these things out, that's fine. So we know what we've got for the next thousand years. And you and I are just going to have to be willing to take abuses in this whole arena. We have, you know, the ground of spirit movement. Some of the things we have said about the fast you know are that we have to be limited in time, and the fast is an arena where our moralism and our phariseeism can break in, and we have to guard against that. And a fast has to be over something and about something.

The fast ~~ways~~ has to be over, for example, the Local Church Experiment, but it also has to be about the Long March. As fast has to be over the fact that we see colleagues dropping by the wayside. And it has to be about the fact that Satan is on the loose. And that has to be held in the fast for it to _____ today. But finally, every fast is about our relationship to God. Someone has pointed out that literally, you know, the fast is just in our 24 hour day. We feast for three hours a day, and we fast for 21. Now that's sort of a great image that we're about the business of feasting and fasting every day. And this morning, eating our French toast, we were breaking the fast, we have been on since ^{midnight} lastnight, except those of us who try to get in the ice box at midnight. But anyway, we break the fast in the morning.

On the fast, we talked about other signs of detachment, perhaps the habit, is where that would be. And the insignia of the habit is extremely important in working through the corporate indices. Now we don't know what that's going to look like, but that there be some guide, I think we're pretty well concensed upon that there needs to be some kind of guide, that is an indece of the style of detachment. And then as ^{the watch} a rock or a sign of obedience to the demands of the Lord in our life. We experimented with that this summer. And that was a great ex ercise. You will recall that we did the other world. We had the classic prints, and we watercolored them. We read a book, and we wrote a homily. That was the structure of the watch. And we tried not to go to sleep. It was jsut an overwhelming encounter with the Word itself. And just a reminder as we were trying not to sleep, or being attentive to writing our homily, or reading our book, it was just a reminder of our own weakness, our own inadequacy. to be that obedient one. It's/As/It's/

And then the Ball, under chastity, to will one thing. All the kind of discipline that was there in the Ball. I mean, that's why doing just 1-2-3 all the time fast and guardingly- I mean you just have to keep your mind on what your doing, or your'w just in a big mess with the whole thing. So just the Ball there. And we've begun

experiment with ^{rings} rings on our right hand...silver bands. And I've had mine now, for a year, I guess. I find it a very powerful symbol. As I begin to teach RSI, I invariably look down at this ring to remind myself that I'm there for ^{just} ~~this~~ one reason, and that is to bring ^{I mean I just want to bring that one} off life to every participant in that course. And we don't know whether we can be the one or not. But the watch is the watch before the cross. That's the indace there. These are some of the arenas that we ^{should} have to talk about this week, and move through.

Then in the chastity. We can go back through ^{just some of the} entities... I would love to go back and take some of those anthropology courses and go back and see how some prescientific ~~societies~~ days up to societies, man has found it necessary to have some kind of ^{sign} ~~time~~ to himself about what his life is all about. ^{I think of} Whether ~~its~~ the stomach cuts on the Africans, or the cartoons of the Maui, or in the Church lecture, where we say we have to have a sign, maybe we'll cut off our left arm. But we couldn't do that because we need both of them in the revolution. ^{specifics} I'd like to give you some (in terms of my own motives) You speak out to the most unlikely person and you say, Maybe I ought to notch your ear. They know after that church lecture that sometimes a ^{cross} ~~fixed~~ has to be created. I guess the edge of our experimentation is in the arena of the ~~Actual~~ Journeys. And that's where we can really be a journey saint (?) And they are nothing, the Journeys, you want to say are nothing, they're sort of like air. Like Jesus when he walked out into the desert. Or, that the journey is into the land of awe. And we are creating several kinds of conversations. that take us, just into the land of mystery. Or that create the fear and fascination of standing before the mystery itself. The sanctities are those exercises which make everything just transparent, awe. And that's our prayer. We have to be those kind of people who come into any situation, and just bring the transparency of awe. That's the only way that the giants are going to be created that we need for the future. One of our best resources for this week is a paper that George West did on Aug. 26, '71. You need to go back to the file and perhaps tonight, during family night, and pull that out and take a look at it. He says there are three conversations

of the psalms, the spirit conversations, and the bible conversations, ~~also~~ called the Luke conversations, and ^{spells out} look at those three methodologies in a very helpful way. And he sets a context for those methodologies that when you and I see transparently through to the fact that life is just raw contingency, and that on the other side of that, we say, nevertheless, life is raw contingency, I say yes to that. That that is the beginning of having a new creature, a new ~~beginning~~ a man, a new woman on your hands. Or, what this acclamation, and that's what all of these spirit conversational are all about, its this affirmation, its only on the other side of the "inspite of yes" that you and I have total, unconditional freedom. And then it becomes apparent, that life is just expenditure. That that's all the price you pay is expenditure. And because of the fact that life is just expenditure is to almost make woman of life itself. ? And you and I have permission to expend our lives, and that gives us permission to intensify our life. ^{when that breaks through} And it becomes apparent that every value that you and I hold becomes relative, to just the one task that we have, and that is to love and serve the Lord (world?).

Now, the Luke conversations, and the spirit conversations, and the psalm conversations, and the visit all are methodologies to create that kind of happening or to take that journey into the center of awe. Or that is to say that the word, of Jesus Christ is at the heart of every methodology that we create.

Now, on the Bible conversations, how we work with those is that were not after some kind of personality of Jesus, but the way those Luke conversations have been put is after the role he chose to play in a given very particular situation in which he found himself. And the psalms, or the spirit conversations,, you start at the center and move back in those psalm conversations, and in the spirit conversations, where you deal with the mountains and the all of that, those conversations are the journey to the center. It's just like there's the center of being and those methodologies are just several of many ways to take man to the center of being itself., where he can decide to be being itself...and he acts sort of a whole new way, in

describing himself. He says the spirit conversation, relative to the journey to the center, is like shhhhhhhhhhh, and the psalm conversations are like pammam. The scripture conversations are like rrrrrrrrrrough. And then the visit ...to the other world. Oh my, Ireally think that those other world charts are the most significant thing our order's ever done. ^{When you ...to the fact that} ^(over speech) / Everyman lives in two worlds...I've been studying that Niebuhr paper... sometimes the awe of those charts just break in...^{to a case that} sometimes we don't even know the wonder of our creating those other world charts. And a thousand years down the road, those other world charts are going to be there.

Now with the visits, those are a different picture in that you are the work. Your state of being is not that of separation, you are united with the mystery. That's the beginning with those visits. And then, just what do they feel like, how do you talk about that state of being of being in ~~the~~ infused with the mystery. Or, it's the Dark Night of the Soul Ecstasy at that last step, of God. That the work --standing there is the work. And it's the resolve, that's the crucial part of it for me, it's the resolve that we bring back from a visit to the other world. And then on the other side of the chart the word ~~the~~ and the league of being...I guess the Gogarten study, for all of us was the most helpful in ~~the~~ beginning to deal with the words of Jesus. And those are conversations where we take some of the actual sayings and work with them. We've done very little work with the deeds of Jesus, but that's a whole arena that we have not done. Now, the only methodologies that I know that we have experimented with that we have not mentioned, is the trek...solitude, is not a matter of time and place, or going away...I mean, I can experience solitude in this very moment, up here talking. And silence, I don't know what we'll do with that as we work through the exercises but we know that it's not a time for some kind of navel gazing, that whatever you be with those exercises, ^{is} is to love and care for the world. And what that looks like, is a whole field of experimentation. In terms of transparent knowing, we experimented with the journal, somewhat, but you know that journal is a formal journal, it's not a diary like, I did this today, and this is my reflection on it.

It's somehow got to be a form where being is there in that journal. And we've just sort of toyed around with the journal in the past.

And then on the pole of transparent doing, our obediences. We picked them up and put them down and picked them up and put them down. But those obediences we talked about are not practical, they're absurd, but these are exercises that illuminate the whole arena of transparent doing. Well, I'll stop now. The exercises, all of them, whatever we create for the movement is -----in all of them. That's quite a job, isn't it? And the sanctities. And its the spirit exercises, which you know, just transform our life, I mean, nothing is changed about life, but everything is transformed. A metamorphosis takes place. And if you haven't been to the movement station to see the 119th psalm, re-written through the categories of the sanctification triangles, you must go by and do that. That's the kind of experimentation that's going on.

What areas do we need to work in? For one thing, we need to draw all of these together. I think we need to sort of brood on that. We need to begin to think about skin bracing, secular skin bracing in the Lens course, is experimenting with, I mean, where we got to fit it in, to our exercises. We need to begin to think about day one, day two, that's another ~~idea/that/fit/~~ very important part of our consciousness.....

Movement station has been doing some experiments - Menting -