

## Chapter 2. Vision of Enchantment

*Leader:* Blessed are you, strong and faithful God, our light and our salvation; to you be glory and praise forever. In the beginning your Word summoned light, night withdrew, and the creation dawned. In the fullness of time, you created in your image humankind, the stewards of all creation. At the dawning of the new creation, you sent your son, the Word made flesh, the light of the world. As we rejoice in the gift of your presence among us, let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, your Spirit ever renew our lives, and your praise ever be on our lips.

*People:* Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

*Leader:* Spirit of God, be near us, and draw us nearer to you. Bless us unto your service. May we share in the joy of Christ's abundant life. Filled with your grace and power, may we live as Christ taught us to pray:

*People:* Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

### Lectio

But where will such a soul be found, one that is so securely rooted in and founded on the faith, so utterly humbled in the annihilation of itself, so lovingly led and fed in the love our Lord; one that has full knowledge and experience of his almighty power, his hidden wisdom, and his glorious goodness, how he is one in all and all are in him: so much so that unless a loving soul entirely surrenders to him all that is from him, by him, and in him, is never truly humbled in complete reduction of self? It is only by this royal reduction of itself to nothing in true humility and the high exaltation of God, its all, in perfect charity, that the soul deserves to have God. When it is deeply immersed in God's love, fully and finally forsaking itself as nothing or less than nothing—if there could be such a thing as less than nothing—then God's love sustains it, keeps and defends it with his power, wisdom, and goodness from all adversity, without any industry or effort, consideration, or reflection on the soul's part. (*Epistle of Privy Counsel*)

### Questions on Chapter 2

1. What is Rohr's "vision of enchantment"? (1-2)
2. What is beginner's mind? (3-5)
3. What is the sign of Jonah? (6-7)
4. What does Rohr mean when he says "All great spirituality is about letting go"? (8-10)
5. What exercise would you suggest to help us "let go"?

### Meditation: Surrender

When through charity and an upright intention a person offers [herself] in all [her] works and in [her] entire life to the glory and praise of God, and when [she] seeks rest in God above all things, then [she] should humbly and patiently, with self-surrender and firm confidence, await new riches and gifts—but always without anxiety about whether God will bestow them or not. This is the way a person makes [herself] ready and capable of receiving an interior life full of desire. When the vessel is ready, the precious liquid is poured in. There is no more precious vessel than a loving soul and no more beneficial drink than the grace of God. It is in this way that a person will offer to God all [her] works and [her] entire life with a simple and upright intention and will also, above that intention, above [herself], above all things, rest in that sublime unity where God and the loving spirit are united without intermediary. (John of Ruusbroeck)

### Exercise: self-giving

In the next two weeks, think about whether you actually trust that everything belongs, that the world is enchanted, that all things work together for the good of those who love him, that God will bless you and keep you and make his face to shine on you. If you do, consider formally surrendering yourself into his care. Consider what kinds of things you do or do not give God permission to do with you in order to save you. Sickness? Suffering? Sorrow? Shame? You might even put it in writing.

Then, it is time to leave the house of self-knowledge. When you pray, consider it a waste of time when you find yourself thinking about yourself, your problems, your needs, your sins, except in a general way. Trust God to care for you. Think instead on God and his love and his beauty. Give yourself to God as often as you can.

## Synonyms for “letting go”

- *Gelassenheit*
- Detachment
- Surrender
- Serenity
- Freedom
- Submission to the will of God
- I offer you my heart, O Lord, promptly and sincerely
- Take up your cross
- Union with Christ

## Rohr quotes

1. Spirituality is about seeing. It's not about earning or achieving. It's about relationship rather than results or requirements. Once you see, the rest follows. You don't need to push the river because you are in it. The life is lived within us and we learn how to say yes to that life. (p. 33)
2. Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a stance. It's a way of living *in* the Presence, in *awareness* of the Presence, and even of enjoying the Presence. The full contemplative is not just aware of the Presence, but trusts it, allows, and delights in it. (31)
3. Beginner's mind is a mixture of eagerness, of spiritual hunger. The beginner's mind knows it needs something. This is a rare feeling in today's treacherously seductive culture, however. . . . The poor have a head start. They can't resort to an instant fix to any problem. . . . To resist an instant fix and acknowledge oneself a beginner is to be open to transformation. (43-44)
4. We must never presume that we see. We must always be ready to see anew. But it's so hard to go back, to be vulnerable, to say to your soul, "I don't know anything." (33)
5. Religion has lost sight of Jesus' message here. It has not tended to create honest humble people who trust that God is always beyond them. We aren't focused on the great mystery. Rather religion has tended to create people who think they have God in their pockets, people with quick, easy, glib answers. (35-36)
6. Jonah was swallowed by the whale and taken where he would rather not go. This was Jesus' metaphor for death and rebirth. . . . We must go inside the belly of the whale for a while. Then and only then will we be spit upon a new shore and understand our call. (44)
7. The paschal mystery is *the* pattern of transformation. We are transformed through death and rising, probably many times. There seems to be no other cauldron of transformation. We seldom go freely into the belly of the beast. Unless there is a major disaster like the death of a friend or spouse or loss of a marriage or job, we will usually not go there . . . to enter willingly, trustingly, into the dark periods of life. . . . We must learn to stay with the pain of life, without answers, without conclusions, and some days without meaning. That is the path, the perilous dark path of true prayer. (45-46)
8. Great religions seek utter awareness and full consciousness, so that we can, in fact, receive all. Everything belongs and everything can be received. We don't have to deny, dismiss, defy, or ignore. What is, is okay. *What is, is the great teacher.* (54)
9. The purpose of prayer and religious seeking is to see the truth about reality, is to see *what is*. And at the bottom of *what is* is always goodness. The foundation is always love. (56)
10. You cannot *earn* this God. You cannot prove yourself worthy of this God. Feeling God's presence is simply a matter of awareness. Of enjoying the now. Deepening one's presence. Once I can see the mystery here, and trust the mystery even in this piece of clay that I am — then I can also see it in you. I am able to see the divine image in myself, in you, and eventually in all things. (57)