**Contemplative Service for Wednesday,**

**August 30, 2023**



*early painting of Lydia of Thyatira in prayer*

*The soul is vast, spacious, plentiful. This amplitude is impossible to exaggerate.*

*The Sun at the center of this place radiates to every part.*

*—St Teresa of Avila*

**First reading**: from Dorothy Day

I believe some people-- lots of people-- pray through the witness of their lives, through the work they do, the friendships they have, the love they offer people and receive from people. Since when are words the only acceptable form of prayer? With prayer, one can go on cheerfully and even happily.

**Music**: Ave Maris Stella, sung by Amana Flodin

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3REKSTRlBc

**Second reading**: from Ilia Delio

Life in God should be a daring adventure of love—a continuous journey of putting aside our securities to enter more profoundly into the uncharted depths of God. Too often, however, we settle for mediocrity. We follow the rules and practices of prayer but we are unwilling or, for various reasons, unable to give ourselves totally to God. To settle on the plain of mediocrity is really to settle for something less than God that leaves the heart restless and unfulfilled. A story from the desert fathers reminds us that giving oneself wholly to God can make a difference: Abba Lot went to see Abba Joseph and said to him, “Abba, as far as I can I say my little office, I fast a little, I pray and meditate, I live in peace and as far as I can, I purify my thoughts. What else can I do?” Then the old man stood up and stretched his hands towards heaven. His fingers became like ten lamps of fire and he said to him, “If you will, you can become all flame.

**Music**: The Jesus Prayer, sung by Harpa Dei

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfzXHDBSaIQ

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

*Grant that my soul may hunger after you.*

*May my heart thirst for you, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the fullness of the house of God.*

*May it ever compass you, seek you, find you, run to you, come up to you, meditate on you, speak of you, and do all for the illumination of your name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, with perseverance to the end; and be you alone ever my hope, my entire confidence, my riches, my delight, my pleasure, my joy, my rest and tranquility, my peace, my sweetness, my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help, my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure; in whom may my mind and my heart be ever fixed and firm and rooted.*

*—from a prayer of St. Bonaventure*

**Communal Blessing**

Living One, prayer is a practice so basic that words are irrelevant. With each breath, let the movements of the soul evolve and emerge. With each breath, our ribs expand, our lungs stir your compassion. With each exhalation, we breathe out your liberation. All prayer universal joins in the great restoration of your presence. May it be so.

**Music**: “Misericordia” from Sybilline by Robin O’Brien

https://sungprayer.bandcamp.com/track/misericordia

*May we join in the great recognitions that are prayer.*