



**January 11-12, 2021**  
**Retreat**

**Monday, January 11, 2021**

**We Gather**

- 1:45 - 2:15 p.m. Retreatants at St. Benedict's Community check into the center.
- 2:15 - 2:30 p.m. \* All Retreatants Log into "Place of Grace"
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. \* We gather and meet each other at the "Place of Grace"

**We Proclaim & Integrate**

- 3:00 – 3:45 p.m. \*Opening Worship (Bring your own communion elements, a limited prepacked supply will be available at the St. Benedict community.)
- 3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Bio break
- 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. \*Content Time
- 4:30 - 5:45 p.m. Silent reflection
- 5:45 – 6:30 p.m. Evening Meal with your community /St. Scholastic  
(Please plan on dining together if you wish)
- 6:30 – 7:00pm Retreatants will gather in their respective place for group reflection either at St. Benedict's or St. Scholastica
- 7:10 - 8:30 p.m. \* Covenant Groups
- 8:30 - 9:10 p.m. Retreatants will gather in their respective sacred space for Social Time
- 9:15- 9:45 p.m. \*Evening Prayer.
- 9:45 pm - Great Silence

**Tuesday, January 12**

- 6:45 - 7:00 a.m. \*"Place of Grace " opens (please join in silence )
- 7:00 - 7:15 a.m. \* Centering Prayer
- 7:15 - 7:30 a.m. \* Morning Prayer
- 7:30 - 8:15 a.m. Breakfast with your community (Please plan on dining together if you wish)
- 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. \*Lectio Divina & Silence -- gather in respective sacred spaces  
[Lectio material & reflection question will be in packet]

**We Discern & Reflect**

- 9:15 - 10:30 a.m. \*Covenant Groups
- 10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Retreatant's at St. Benedict's Community check out of their rooms.
- 10:45 - 11:15 a.m. \* Exploring Spiritual Exercises
- 11:15 to Noon \*"Community Discernment" ---Covenanting & "soft farewell" to total group
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m Lunch Retreatants will gather in their respective sacred space  
(Please plan on dining together if you wish)

**We Go Forth**

- 1:00p.m– 2:30 p.m.\* Closing Worship -- Saying Goodbye

Blessings from the leadership team of Cathy Cole, Amy Warner, Carla Gunn, Dale Coates, Cheryl Somers-Ingersol and Jim Bendorf!

As we enter 2021 and the season of Epiphany, our focus will be on:



***Receiving Time as a Gift of God***

Our culture and most of us are obsessed about time. It drives us, guides us, and shapes us, but usually in a way that makes it more an enemy than a friend. For many, 2020 distorted, even broke our sense of time. During the retreat, we will reflect on how in 2021 we can become more ‘time-full’ as we receive time as a gift of God.

In this packet is some of the content we will share. We encourage you to print out this material for our time together.

As we check in on Monday, you are invited to ponder and answer the question “How, then, shall we live?” in 2021. A series of adverbial phrases\* are laid out on the screen and the next page. Which one calls out or resonates with you as we begin to live into 2021? Be prepared to share your phrase and briefly say why.

(From Marilyn McEntyre’s book, *Adverbs for Advent*)

# 2021: How, then, shall we live?

Live **Generously**

Live Simply

Live **Healthily**

**LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY**

Live **Beautifully**

Live Locally

*Live Expectantly*

Live Faithfully

Live Prudently

Live Mindfully

LIVE PLAYFULLY

Live Mercifully

*Live Gratefully*

Live Patiently

Live Wisely

LIVE SPACIOUSLY

**Live Courageously**

LIVE BOLDLY

**Live Healthily**

## Content: ***Receiving Time as a Gift***



Ecclesiastes tells us in chapter 3, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” But it also notes in verse 9 that “God has put a sense of past and future (eternity) in their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.”

Time is an elusive concept. Although it is central to everything we do and as omnipresent to us as the air we breath or water to a fish, both culturally and experientially, time is relative and mysterious. Despite our best efforts to ‘manage,’ quantify, manipulate, ‘turn back,’ or commodify time, time remains elusive and uncontrollable. It is God who holds all time in God’s hand.

For many, the pandemic broke our sense of time. Here are some links to a few articles on this:

[The coronavirus pandemic has shattered our sense of time ...  
www.washingtonpost.com › lifestyle › style › 2020/09/10](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/the-coronavirus-pandemic-has-shattered-our-sense-of-time-2020-09-10/)

[The Coronavirus Has Warped All Sense of Time | WIRED  
www.wired.com › coronavirus-time-warp-what-day-is- it](https://www.wired.com/story/the-coronavirus-has-warped-all-sense-of-time/)

[A Monday Is a Tuesday Is a Sunday as COVID-19 Disrupts ...  
www.scientificamerican.com › article › a-monday-is-a-t...](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-monday-is-a-tuesday-is-a-sunday-as-covid-19-disrupts-time/)

[I want to hit the button that says, 'Resume life.' But this is life ...  
www.washingtonpost.com › health › 2020/11/20](https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/i-want-to-hit-the-button-that-says-resume-life-but-this-is-life-2020-11-20/)

Dr. John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, would say that our sense of time was distorted long before the pandemic. Theologically, Swinton suggests, time for most of us (and this is Augustine) –is deeply disrupted. Augustine, in trying to talk about God’s relationship to time, suggests that time came into existence when God created the world. So time is a creature, a dimension of creation, a gift from a loving Creator. Its purpose, as an aspect of God’s relationship and love for the world, is to facilitate and sustain that relationship and love. Yet when creation falls, so too does time. That’s why we have so much difficulty with controlling time—and time controlling us. And like all of creation—time also

needs to be redeemed—returned to its proper purpose. (*Becoming Friends of Time: Disability, Timefulness and Gentle Discipleship*, pp 57-63)

The Good News is that in the ‘fullness of time’ God sent his Son--and in Jesus, fallen time (and all creation) begins to encounter its redemption.

As Swinton writes,

”... culture informs us that our lives are intended to be lived at speed and that time is of use only if we use it up quickly and efficiently. ‘If this is the only time you have, do not waste it!’ However, if in Jesus the fullness of time is upon us, the Christian calling will be to live out a different understanding of time and to learn how to dwell peaceably within God’s time. The beginning point for living out and living within God’s time is really quite simple. God is love and God calls us to love. **Such love takes time.**” (*Becoming Friends of Time*, p. 67)

The first step then to returning time to its proper purpose (as an arena for the revelation of God’s love), is to slow down because ‘love has a speed.’ In fact, theologian Kosuka Koyama in his book, *Three Mile an Hour God*, suggests that the speed of Love is three miles an hour.

“God walks ‘slowly’ because he is love. If he is not love he would have gone much faster. Love has its speed. It is a spiritual speed. It is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It is ‘slow’ yet it is Lord over all other speeds since it is the speed of love. It goes on in the depth of our life, whether we notice it or not. At three miles an hour. It is the speed we walk and therefore the speed the love of God walks.’

Kate Bowler has a wonderful interview with Dr. Swinton in her podcast, *Everything Happens*. <https://katebowler.com/podcasts/john-swinton-the-speed-of-love/>

In it she touches on the joy, the wonder, and the gift of time that is revealed to her in her four year old son’s question: “Is this a good time to talk about lizards?” During our time for reflection, we invite you to ponder that question as well as the ones on the next page.



# Questions to Ponder

How have you experienced 'time' during the pandemic?  
(thin? A blur? Broken? Deep? Full? A Waste? A Gift?)

How would you describe your relationship with 'time' in 'normal' times?

How do we begin to 'redeem time'? Put it in its proper place? Receive it as a gift? Become friends with time? Live Time-fully?

Swinton notes that the original purpose of bells and clocks was to call monks to prayer, to spend time with God. Clocks enabled people to spend their time faithfully. How is that different (or not) for you?

What is the 'Speed of Love'? Who are you following at 6 miles per hour?

Is now a good time to talk about lizards?

## Group Lectio Divina

**Reader one:** Carla

**Silence** –notice what word or phrase spoke to you

**Respond** in chat with a word or phrase that spoke to you.

**Reader two:** Dale

**Silence** –What do you hear God saying to you in this passage?

If you like, share your response in your covenant group.

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I pledge to walk the road of compassionate living, determined to bring about a new time...

And then, all that has divided us will merge....

And then, compassion will be wedded to power....

And then, softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind...

And then, both men and women will be gentle...

And then, no person will be subject to another's will...

And then, all will be rich and free and varied...

And then, the greed of some will give way to the needs of many..

And then, all will share equally in the earth's abundance...

And then, all will care for the sick, the weak, the old...

And then, all will nourish the young...

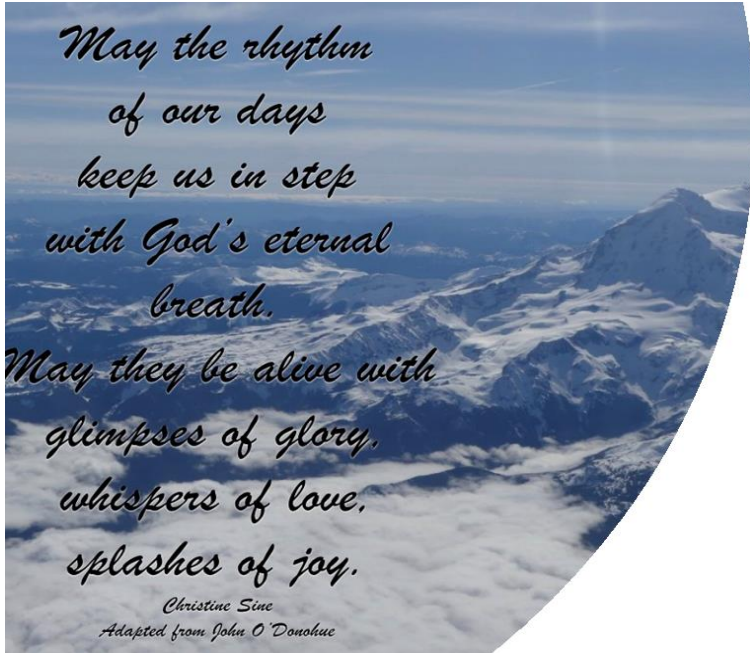
And then, all will cherish life's creatures...

And then, all will live in harmony...

And then, all will see mercy and recognize God dwelling in our midst...

And then, will all creation know the new Jerusalem!





## Exploring Spiritual Exercises

### An Examen for the Year

As we transition into the new year, let's try an Examen prayer of our previous year. The Examen helps us reflect on a past period of time and then look toward the new year.

#### **Step One: Become aware of God's presence.**

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you review the year with a holy perspective—with wisdom, grace, and faith. Ask for the grace to tear yourself away from your own patterns of thinking and seeing so that you can see your life more as God sees it.

#### **Step Two: Review the year 2020.**

What are you most grateful for over the past year? How has God spoken to you over this last year? What gave you joy in your spiritual journey? What has been your biggest struggle? What have been your greatest pressure in life/ministry? How has God spoken to you through the struggles and pressures?

### **Step Three: Pay attention to your emotions.**

How do the above impact your spiritual wellbeing? Think over the year again and notice your emotional reactions. What memories speak most loudly to you? What events, conversations, relationships, or activities bring up the most emotion now, as you remember them? Ask God to help you linger with these emotions, whether they are pleasant or disturbing. Ask for help in understanding why you feel as you do. What can you learn about yourself or about your situation as you dwell in your emotional responses?

### **Step Four: Choose one feature of the year and pray from it.**

While you are lingering with your memories and emotions, settle on one feature. Perhaps it is a single event, or maybe it's a pattern of your own behavior that has come to mind as you reviewed the year. Whatever it is that has emerged, allow it to fuel your prayer. Don't worry about the many other aspects of the year that you could think about right now; stay with the one thing that has come to you with the most power and pray from those thoughts and emotions.

### **Step Five: Looking toward the new year.**

**What changes is God prompting you to make in order to further your spiritual growth?** In your daily or weekly commitments and rhythms? In your spiritual routines? How will you "make friends with time" in order to adhere to your plan? What is one new practice you would like to institute to help maintain your new patterns? What is one relationship you could nurture to provide accountability and encouragement as you walk this journey? Share your way forward with God now and ask for the graces you will need.

**End your prayer, thanking God for love and life and holy possibilities.**





As this year ends and gives way to a new one  
think of it as a gift you have received.  
In the joys and struggles, delights and losses,  
grace has made its way into you.  
Give thanks even if you don't know what for.  
Whatever regrets you have for the year just passed,  
hand them over now. Without judgment,  
place them in the hands of the Forgiving One  
and let it all simply become part of your story.  
Whatever hopes you have for the year to come,  
trust it as another gift.  
Be prepared to welcome the moment  
each moment, with wonder and love.  
Whatever resolutions you make for the new year,  
know that a deeper current than what you want  
or what you resolve is what God is doing in you.  
Attend, and follow.  
The new year will bring you grace.  
May you receive it deeply. (Source: Steve Garnaas-Holmes, *Unfolding Light*)



God as this new year dawns,  
May we take time to see the newness you are giving birth to.  
May we not be blinded by the darkness that consumes our world.  
Or consumed by the fear that paralyzes our actions.  
May we remember,  
That out of winter's darkness you bring forth light,  
That out of winter's death you give birth to new life.  
May we remember,  
That which has been dormant will spring to life,  
That which has been pruned will sprout new strength.  
May we remember,  
You are the light by which we see,  
You are the fountain that gives us life.  
God as this new year emerges,  
May we give birth to that which honors you,  
May we bring to life that which allows your goodness to shine,  
May we give fresh expression to your eternal world,  
And in the depths of our hearts may we cry,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven. Amen

*Christine Sine,*

