

## ***A SPIRITUALITY OF COMMUNION***

### ***to see or to perish*** Teilhard de Chardin

God "sees" and "attends" - and in the act of **seeing** God creates. Another way of saying this is to say God "makes room" for creation by constricting divine power. This quintessential female experience - making room for another - is always creative - it is a birthing into new life.

*Think of your own birth - and see in it a metaphor for God giving you the space to be yourself - naming you, and bringing you to life. Allow this to sink in - God as space, creative space, for you to find life.*

When we look or listen to someone, or something - really look and listen - **something happens**. Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Zen Buddhist master says: "When we breathe, when we are mindful, when we look deeply at our food, life becomes real at that very moment."

**Let God** - dream you into existence-**the gift of identity**

look at you into life- **the gift of dignity**

hear you into speech- **the gift of freedom**

We are persons-in-relation, just as God is. Marvel at this relationship. Savour it.

"We cannot see our faces. We are not meant to try. We see the faces of others. We need them to see us." We turn towards the other person, offering ourself, the sign of our personality - it is our way of paying attention. "Facing" someone else is a gesture of courage and sincerity. Jesus is God's face turned towards us.

*The poet Rilke says of the bond between two people: that "each should stand ground over the solitude of the other". Elizabeth O'Connor says: "We are to hold each other to let each other go. Holding is what makes possible letting go and letting go, in turn, makes possible holding." This balance - not easily achieved - suggests a deep, interior freedom, involving self- awareness and self-forgetfulness, and the courage to be ourselves.*

*Communio* was the central ecclesiological concept of the Second Vatican Council, and was in fact a reworking of an important Biblical term. *Communio* or *koinonia* is central for Orthodox Christians. Remarkably, in a totally unplanned way, communion has emerged as the key term and the common denominator for the different Christian traditions. Ecumenically it is a word with tremendous significance and possibility. *Communio* is both the source and goal of the Christian journey.

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