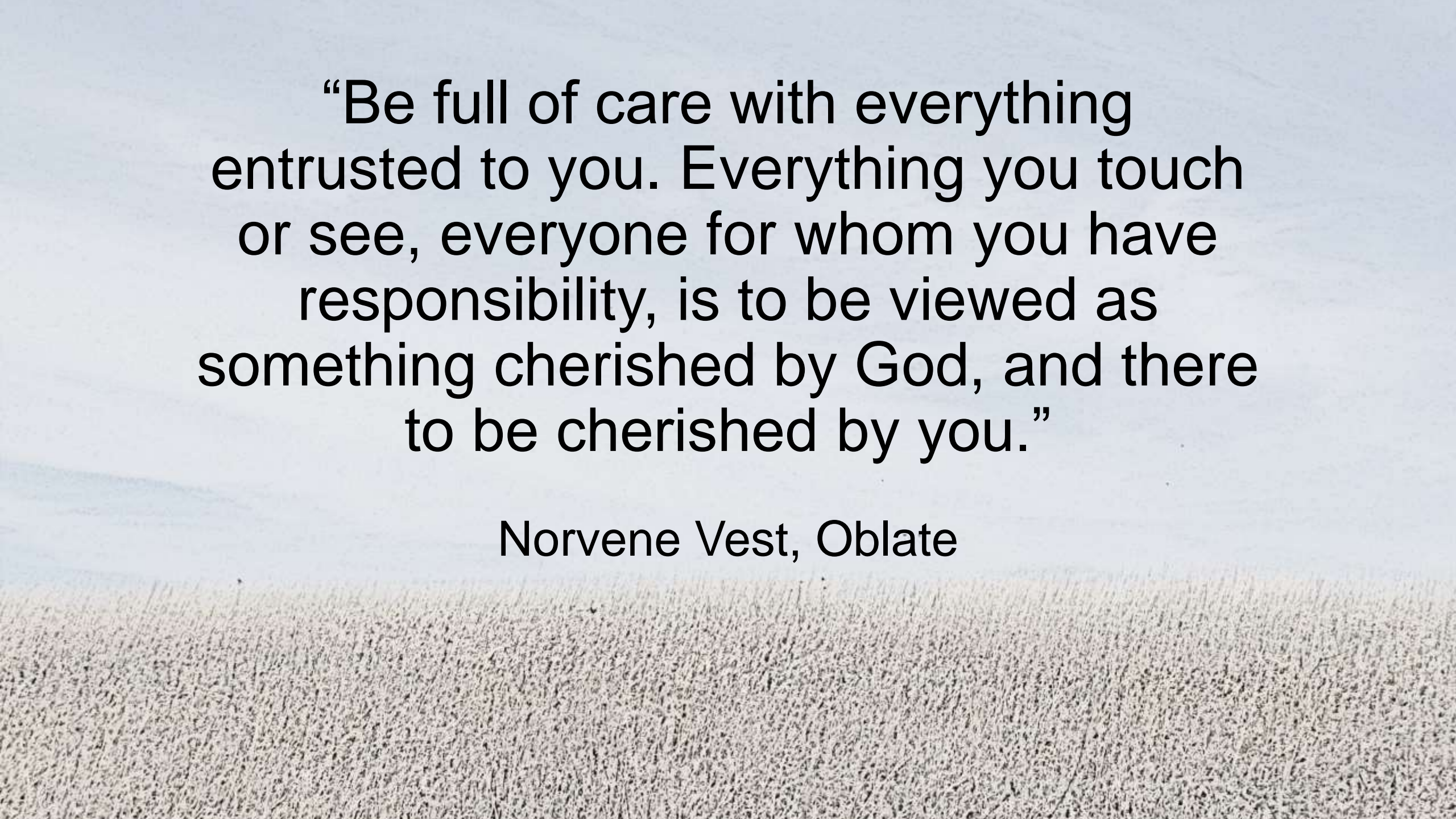


Contemplative Practices

Carol Olson

Lead Dean, Nebraska Oblates

Certified Spiritual Director



“Be full of care with everything entrusted to you. Everything you touch or see, everyone for whom you have responsibility, is to be viewed as something cherished by God, and there to be cherished by you.”

Norvene Vest, Oblate

The Use of Time

- Chronos Time

- Chronological time
- Counting the seconds
- “Killing” time
- Time/energy wasted in taking in loads of information every day, and discerning how to respond.

- Kairos Time

- Losing track of time (in a positive way)
- Significant moments that are never forgotten—Sept 11th, 2001
- State of being outside of time
- A Contemplative use of time

Characteristics of Contemplation

- Definition
- Savoring
- Varieties of Contemplative practices via the Tree of Contemplative Practices

Contemplation/Contemplative

- Someone who lives in the temple, to be inside something that is whole
- Gets charged up by both engaging with life **and** reflecting on it
- Making your heart hospitable to the Divine
- "The opposite of contemplation is not action, it is reaction. We must wait for pure action, which always proceeds from a contemplative silence." - Richard Rohr, Silent Compassion: Finding God in Contemplation

“Taste and See...”



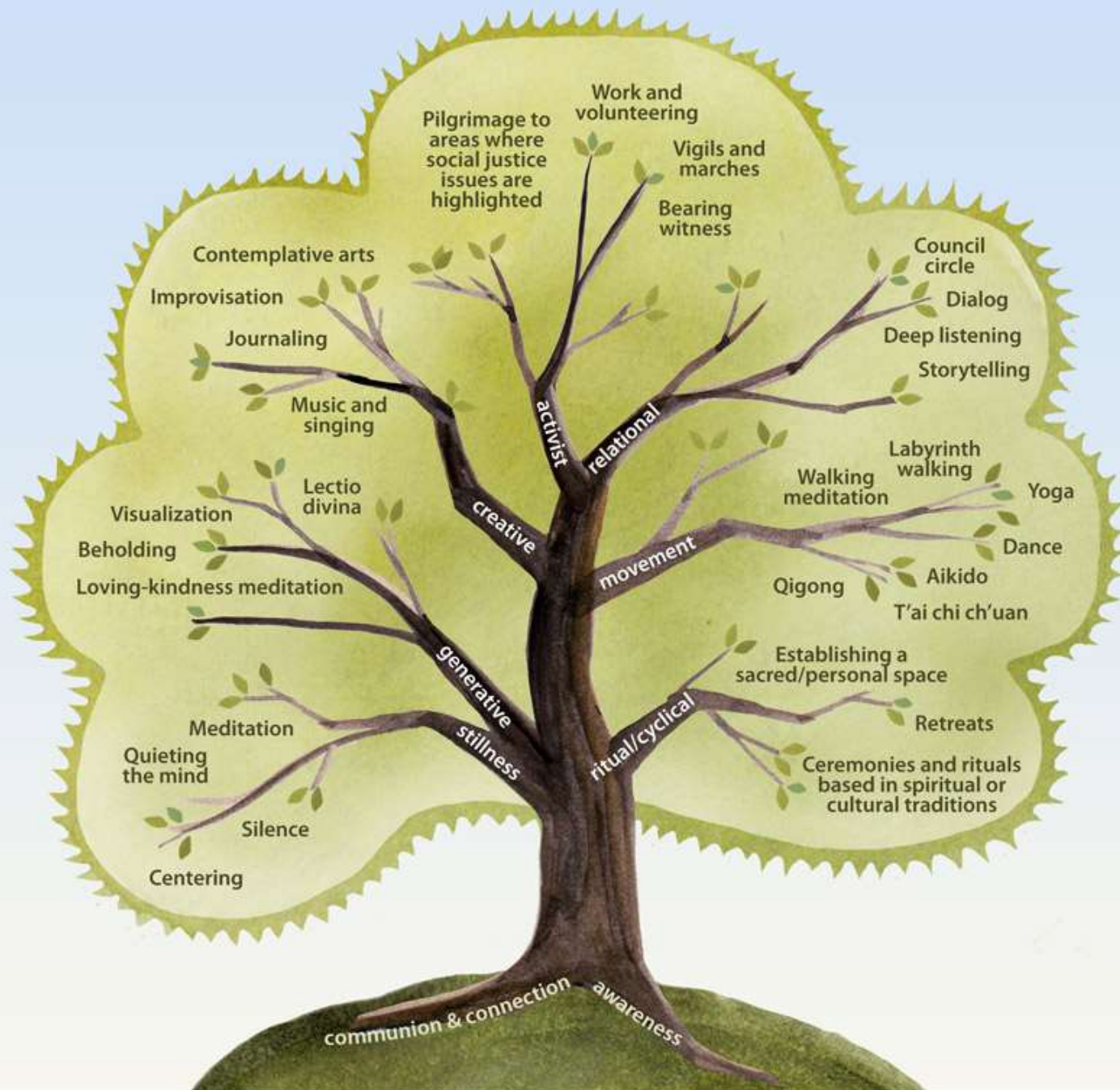


That the Lord is Good!

Psalms 34:8

Savoring

“The true contemplative will teach us the art of savoring. If we savored more, we would buy less. We would be less compulsive, less unsatisfied. We would work less and play more...if we savored more, we would communicate more deeply, relate more fully, compete less regularly, and celebrate more authentically. We would be relating more deeply to ourselves, to creation in all its blessedness, to history past and future, to the now, and to God.” **Matthew Fox**



The Tree of Contemplative Practices
www.contemplativemind.org

Consider...

- Which branch do you immediately gravitate to?
- Which branch do you find most challenging/not “like” you?
- Take time to sit with each end of the spectrum
- Trust your inner wisdom to sense which to begin with
- Realize your affinity may change over time

Tree of Contemplative Practices

Roots

- Awareness
- Communion & Connection

Branches

- Stillness
- Generative
- Creative
- Activist
- Relational
- Movement
- Ritual/Cyclical

Stillness Branch

- Calming the mind
 - Quieting the body
- ▶ Silence
 - ▶ Meditation
 - ▶ Centering Prayer

Generative Branch

- Thoughts
 - Feelings
 - Emotions
 - Devotion
- ▶ Lectio Divina
 - ▶ Visualization
 - ▶ Beholding
 - ▶ Loving-kindness meditation



Scripture Resources for Lectio Divina

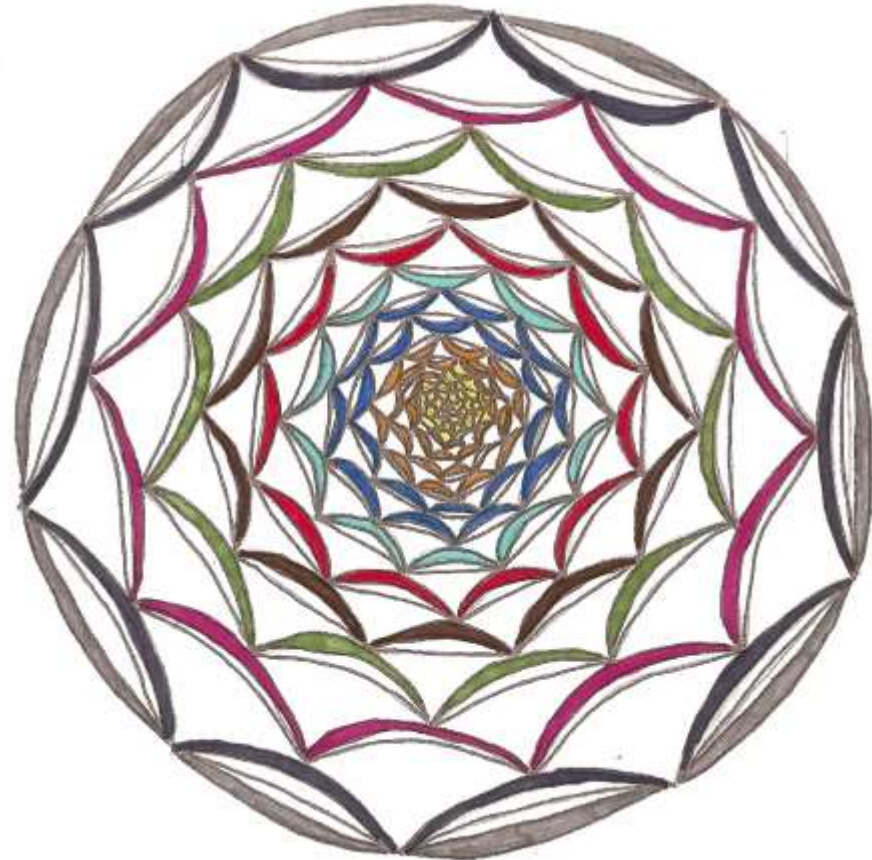
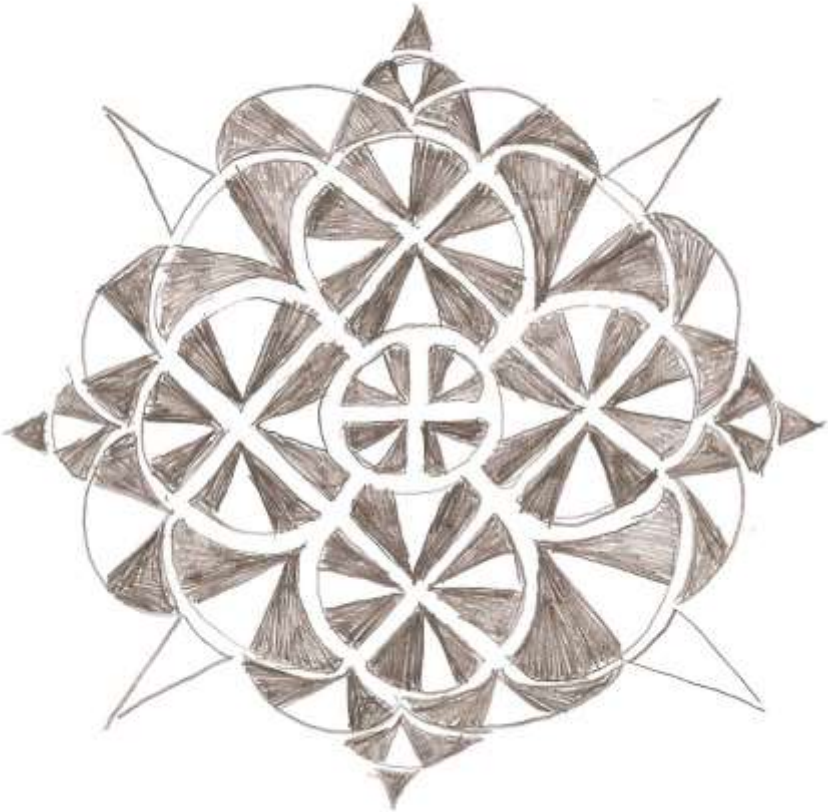
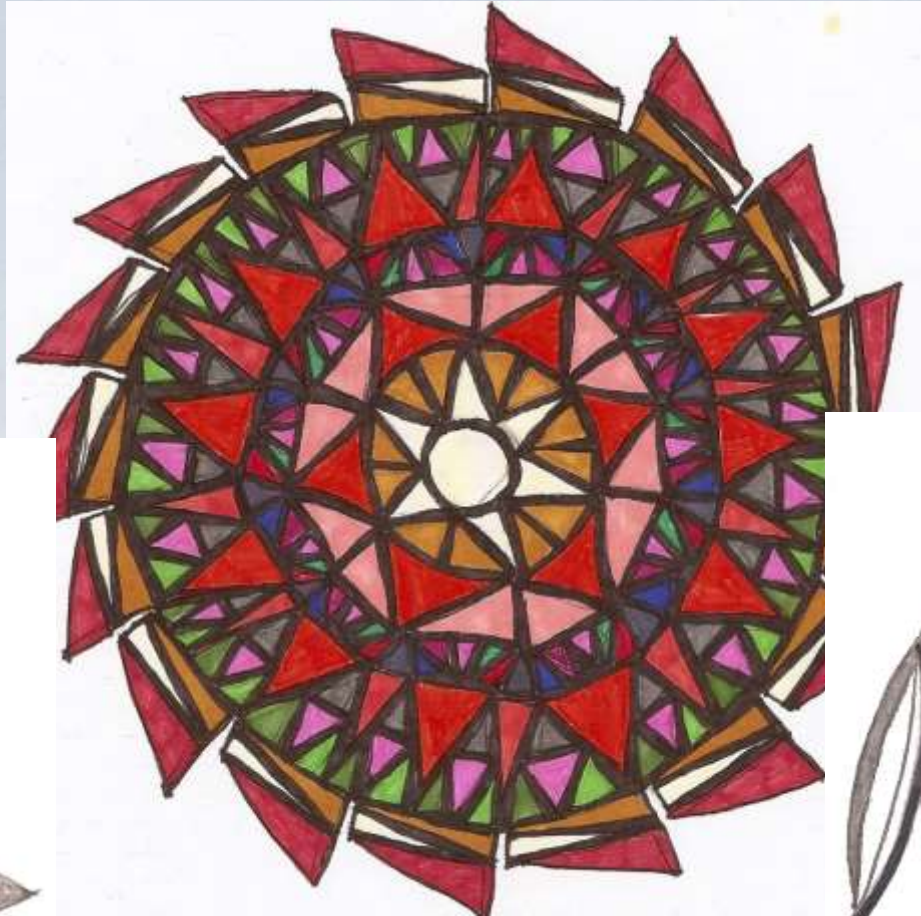
- Ps 95: “If you hear God’s voice today, do not harden your hearts”.
- Ps 63:1 “You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.”
- Proverbs 4:23 “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

Rule of St. Benedict verses for L.D.

- RB 4:20-21—“Your way of acting should be different from the world’s way; the love of Christ must come before all else.”
- RB 19 :1—“We believe that the divine presence is everywhere”
- RB 7: “Our thoughts are always present to God”.

Creative Branch

- Journaling
- Music and Singing
- Improvisation
- Contemplative Arts
 - Poetry
 - Mandala drawing



Activist Branch

- Work and volunteering
- Vigils and marches
- Pilgrimage to areas where social justice issues are highlighted
- Bearing Witness

Relational Branch

- Council Circle
- Dialog
- Deep Listening
- Storytelling

Council Circle

From Native American culture

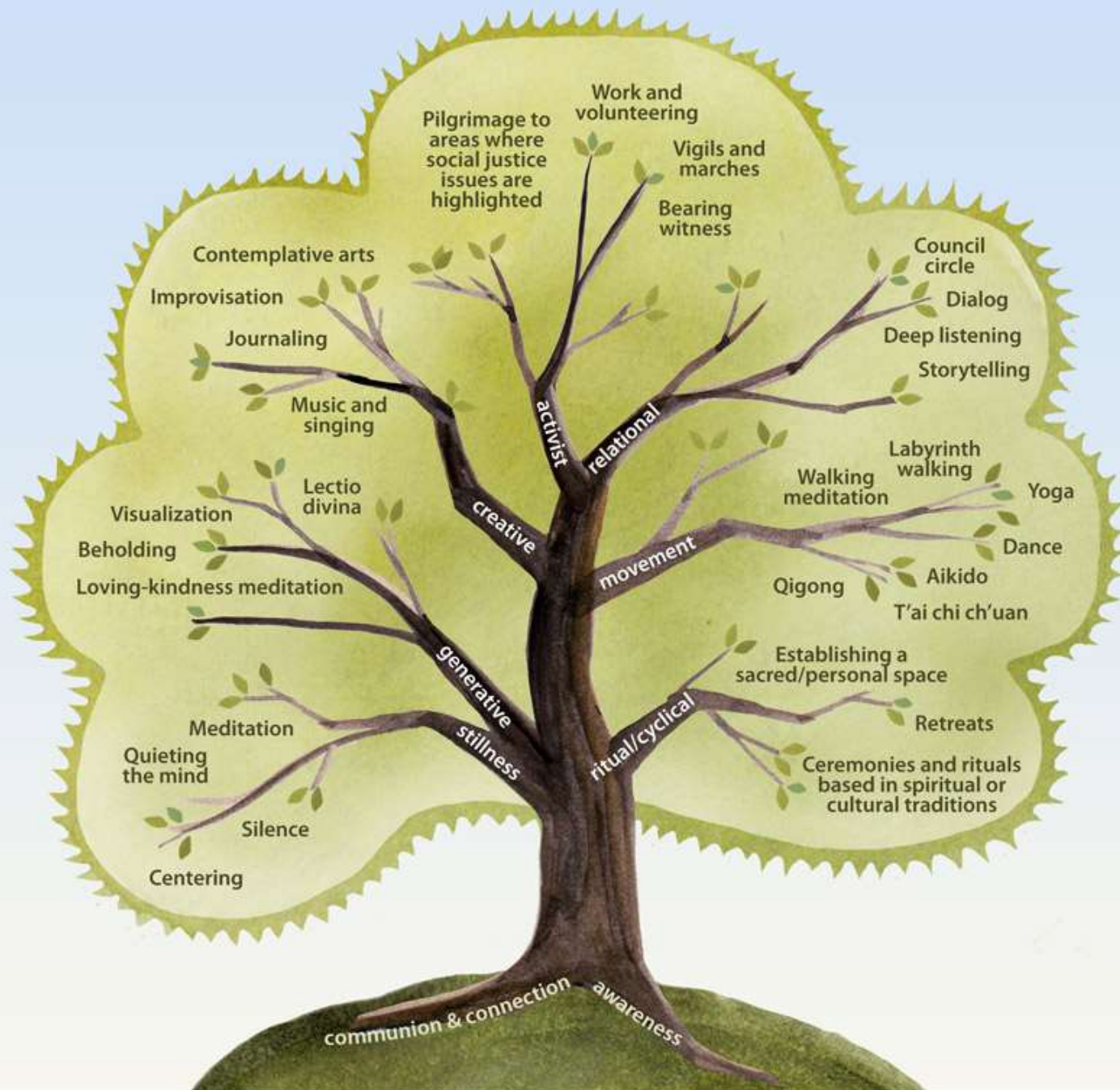
- “Speak from the heart”
- “Listen from the heart”
- “Speak spontaneously”
- “Speak leanly”

Movement Branch

- Walking meditation
 - Labyrinth walking
 - Yoga
 - Aikido
 - Qigong
 - T'ai chi ch'uan
 - Dance
- Embodied Prayer
Roy De Leon
(Oblate OSB)

Ritual/Cyclical Branch

- Establishing a sacred/personal space
- Retreats
- Ceremonies and rituals based in spiritual or cultural traditions



The Tree of Contemplative Practices

www.contemplativemind.org

Resources for Contemplative Practices

- Unknown author: “The Cloud of Unknowing”
- Cynthia Bourgeault “Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening”
- Roy De Leon: “Praying with the Body” book and DVD
- Roger Ferlo: “Sensing God: Reading Scripture with All our Senses”
- Helen Curry: “The Way of the Labyrinth: A Powerful Meditation for Everyday Life”



<http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree>