

October 12, 2007

Dear friends in the Contemplative Society,

Happy Thanksgiving to each of you! Although here in the States it will be six more weeks before we can use that greeting officially, thanksgiving is uppermost on my mind as I write to my Canadian friends this rainy New England weekend. Thanks to your faithful love and support, I was able to spend long stretches of this past spring and summer in hermitage on Eagle Island. What transpired in the spiritual world is, as always, a work in progress, but what happened in the physical universe is more tangible: I actually managed to complete a book manuscript! If all goes well, *THE WISDOM JESUS* (an adaptation and slight expansion of my 2005 *Sounds True* CD series) will be published by Shambhala in the spring of 2008. Be on the lookout for it!

The fact that this project happened at all I owe entirely to several members of our Calgary contemplative group, particularly Bob Pynn, who masterminded the project of having the CD series transcribed, and Ellen Lea, who did the actual work: 12 CD sides, 108 single-spaced manuscript pages, hand-transcribed virtually flawlessly. Thanks beyond thanks, dear friends. From there it was another four months of hard elbow grease to turn a transcript into a book manuscript, but I hope the results will be as satisfying to you as they are to me.

Speaking of books, as many have discovered, my first book, *LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH*, has been out of print for about a year now, and I have been briskly selling down my private stash. But Lynn Bauman and I are actively in the process of republishing it under his Praxis Institute logo. Hopefully all the steps will be navigated by the end of the year, and it, too, should be emerging in new form in the spring of 08.

Last summer was another good teaching season in the Pacific Northwest, with a dynamic joint seminar with Fr. Thomas Keating at Vancouver School of Theology, followed by a short but magical Contemplative Society weekend retreat on Thetis Island. In late August I again ventured toward the 48<sup>th</sup> parallel to lead a five-day Centering Prayer retreat on the Olympic Peninsula for Contemplative Outreach Northwest. With the momentum continuing to build from Thetis Island (so it seemed), we were able to combine very deep silent prayer with wisdom teaching, chanting, and even some Sufi turning prayer. A distinct flavour is beginning to emerge in this work, for which I am most grateful.

Plans are already in high gear for my planned three-month return to British Columbia during the fall of 2008. In addition to teaching a weekly class on the Theology and Practice of Prayer at Vancouver School of Theology, I'll also be leading a five-day Contemplative Society silent retreat at Rivendell (on Bowen Island), a second Contemplative Leadership Training Event, (also at Rivendell), and weekly or biweekly teaching in Vancouver and Victoria. There are also events being planned in Kamloops, Calgary, and Seattle, plus a Thanksgiving retreat at Hollyhock, on Cortes Island. I can't tell you how excited I am about the possibility to return to my contemplative home for some real quality time with all of you. Stay tuned to the Contemplative Society website to keep current on events—and while the schedule is filling up, don't hesitate to inquire if you'd like to try to arrange a teaching or retreat event with your own group.

And yes, for all of those beloved friends who first lured me to BC in the summer and fall of 1994, you can be sure that I'll be making the sentimental journey back to Salt Spring Island for at least one or two teaching sessions.

There's much more to share with you than a single letter can hold, of course—and now that the book is done (and work on the Mary Magdalene book only slowly getting underway again), I'll try to be a bit more regular in my cyber postings. (And speaking of thanksgivings isn't the new website grand?)

To all of you, till the next time we meet, I send my love and my blessing. May your holidays be richly blessed.

Cynthia