

Conspire 2018

**A Webcast with Richard Rohr OFM, Barbara Holmes,
Brian McLaren, Barbara Brown Taylor and Mirabai Starr**

Date and Time: Friday September 21, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday September 22, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Cost: Commute \$85 (includes lunch on Saturday)
Add supper: \$15/evening*
Add bed & breakfast: \$70/night
** please confirm with receptionist that supper will be available on these evenings*

Detail: THE PATH OF DESCENT IS THE PATH OF TRANSFORMATION

How do we change and grow? How do we become our most whole selves, deeply connected with God and others? How do we learn to experience ourselves as interconnected so that we can truly love? The mystics of many spiritual traditions teach the path of descent - surrender, generative self-emptying, dying before you die - as the way of transformation. More than ideas or success, uncertainty, failure, relapse, suffering (personal and communal), and woundedness are our primary teachers.

The pattern of down and up, loss and renewal, enslavement and liberation, exile and return is quite clear in the Hebrew Scriptures. Through his own journey, Jesus modeled this counter-intuitive wisdom: "Unless the grain of wheat dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." To avoid the death of our small, separate self is to avoid transformation into God, into union with one another, into something more. We must lose our life to find our life.

Join us for a time of contemplative teachings, practices, reflection, and conversation with Richard Rohr, Barbara Holmes, Brian McLaren, Barbara Brown Taylor, and Mirabai Starr in this webcast of the conference held August 31-September 2 in Albuquerque, NM.

Conspirare. Let's breathe together. Inhale and exhale, listen and share, let go and receive. Open heart, mind, and body to the surprising wisdom to be found in darkness and descent.

Website facilitator: Sarah Donnelly

To register please call 306-242-1916 or email: receptionist@queenshouse.org

Register early for this enriching experience of learning and spiritual growth - registration deadline: September 19.

Presenters:

"We need to deeply trust and allow both our own dyings and our own certain resurrections, just as Jesus did! This is the full pattern of transformation. If we trust both, we are indestructible. That is how Jesus "saves" us from meaninglessness, cynicism, hatred, and violence—which is indeed death."

Richard Rohr is a Franciscan priest of the New Mexico Province. He is the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation and academic dean of the CAC's Living School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. An internationally recognized author and spiritual leader, Fr. Richard teaches primarily on incarnational mysticism, nondual consciousness, and contemplation, with a particular emphasis on how these affect the social justice issues of our time. He is the author of numerous books, including *Falling Upward*, *Immortal Diamond*, *The Divine Dance*, *Essential Teachings on Love*, and a forthcoming book on the Universal Christ (fall 2018).

"In the beginning there is darkness. It is the womb out of which we are born. Darkness may be the blessed dimming of ego-driven striving, a destination and condition of safety and repose. In this state of trusting refuge, the light of divine revelation, which pierces but does not castigate the darkness, may finally be seen. This is a mothering darkness that nurses its offspring."

Barbara Holmes received a Doctor of Philosophy in Religion (Ethics) from Vanderbilt and also holds degrees in divinity, sociology, theater arts, education, and law. She is a spiritual teacher and writer focused on African American spirituality, mysticism, cosmology, and culture. She has worked with homeless missions, HIV/AIDS support groups, and international ministries in Kenya and Japan. Barbara's most recent publications include *Dreaming, Liberation and the Cosmos: Conversations with the Elders* and *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*.

"Comfort and power can become great enemies of true spirituality, which explains why we often say that the prophets come not only to comfort the afflicted, but also to afflict the comfortable."

Brian McLaren, a public theologian and former pastor, advocates and works toward "a new kind of Christianity" - just, generous, and working with people of all faiths for the common good. Brian is a leader in the Convergence Network, developing an innovative mentoring program for pastors, church planters, and lay leaders. Brian has appeared on numerous television and radio programs, including *All Things Considered* and *On Being*; his work has been covered in *Time*, *New York Times*, *Christianity Today*, and elsewhere. Brian's books include *A Generous Orthodoxy*, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?*, *We Make the Road by Walking*, and *The Great Spiritual Migration*.

"I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light."

Barbara Brown Taylor is a best-selling author, teacher, and Episcopal priest. Her first memoir, *Leaving Church*, explores faith, doubt, and vocation. Her most recent book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, invites readers to consider the spiritual meaning and generativity of darkness. She has served on the faculties of Piedmont College, Columbia Theological Seminary, Arrendale State Prison for Women, and other institutions. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees for Mercer University and is working on her fourteenth book, *Holy Envy*, forthcoming from HarperOne in August 2018.

"Everything we thought we knew feels like it is unraveling and we have nowhere to turn but into the center of radical unknowing. Like a physical desert, this seemingly barren space teems with spiritual energy. God lives here, hidden under every stone, flaming from the harsh sun, concealed by the crescent moon."

Mirabai Starr's passion is sharing the inter-spiritual teachings of the mystics. She is well known for her translations of the Christian mystics John of the Cross, Teresa of Ávila, and Julian of Norwich. Mirabai is a bridge builder - between religious traditions, between contemplative life and compassionate service, between cultivating an inner relationship with the Beloved and expressing that intimacy in community, between the transformational power of loss and longing for the sacred. She is the author of numerous books, including *God of Love: A Guide to the Heart of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, and *Caravan of No Despair: A Memoir of Loss and Transformation*.