

## The Essential Bernadette Roberts

Bernadette Roberts never thought about self or understood the death of Christ until consciousness was removed from her body completely. Only then did she start to write books but, without a significant portion of her brain functioning, her books are a little unorganized and slightly repetitive. She never reviewed her writing because the desire to do so had left with consciousness. Only when her friends would point out certain confusing passages did she go back and fix them.

If you want to really understand the greatest mystic of all time, it is not enough to read just a few of her books. You must read them all, and probably multiple times. In these pages before you I have selected all the passages in which she writes about her remarkable experiences as well as what she learned from them. This is an overview of her entire spiritual life told in her own words. I have refrained from providing commentary since that is what my other books do. All words in parentheses are hers. The few words necessary to explain something about the quote I put in brackets ([-]). After this brief introduction, this is Bernadette in her own words explaining her experiences in roughly the order she had them.

Please remember that when she wrote these things, she was no longer having ANY experiences since the experiencer was gone. She was going back and reflecting on the work of Grace and sharing all that God had given her to know from her experiences. I start with her autobiography Contemplative, then take from The Path to No-Self even though it was written after The Experience of No-Self because, again, the goal is to present her spiritual life in roughly chronological order.

Then there are selections from her other books. You may see a development of her thought over the almost forty years she wrote. I don't think there are any inherent inconsistencies. She never actually contradicts herself, although her wording around Jesus being God or not does evolve. Basically, by the time she was writing her final masterpiece The Real Christ, she had become appalled at the extent to which Jesus, a man in the past, was being worshipped while the Logos remains unknown.

When she was three her parents sat her down and explained to her that they were not her real parents. God was her real parent and they were just taking care of her. Whenever they "got after" her she would often just shrug it off and think to herself, "They don't really know me anyway because only God knows what It has created." This left her with a lifelong feeling of freedom and independence.

She was always being told when you are older you will know the answer to this or that question. She couldn't imagine waiting around her entire life for answers. She decided she would have to figure things out for herself because nobody was going to give her the answers. She had a voracious curiosity and was impatient with ignorance.

When she was four, she had an experience of something huge and close yet indistinct emerge from the sea as she sat near its waves. She got the feeling that it wanted to be sure she saw it. Years later she described it as "an invisible face with large serious dark eyes staring at me." She felt that the attraction was mutual and often went to the sea to be with her secret friend.

She asked her father about the monk in the painting on the wall. "What's he doing there?" Her father replied, "That monk is looking at God, contemplating God". Because of her experience with the sea, she knew that God was what she did not visibly see in nature. So after

“gazing” out the window awhile she concluded, “The monk is right, I see God too.” She says that ability to see God in nature never left her. But also, that “one first has to see God before they can contemplate God, otherwise they don’t really know what they’re looking at.”

Excerpts (mostly) from autobiography Contemplative:

Co p. 194 “I [her father] prayed ‘Oh God, take her for yourself, I give her to you, I give up all the joys of having her and accept the sorrow of losing her, only take her to yourself!’ Just then you cried out and I shouted for joy, ‘She belonged to God before she belonged to this world!’ (His meaning, of course, was that having been baptized before I breathed, I belonged to God first, and only secondly, to this world.”

Co p. 195 “When he said, ‘Take her, she is yours, not mine’ God did just that, He not only took the child, but raised her every step of the way – a difficult way since it was not her way by nature. So the answer to ‘why me?’ was the working out of a covenant between God and a father, a covenant that worked both ways: the father gave his child to God and, in turn, God gave the child everything. Although this child could have been any child in the world, the same could not be said of the father. Not just any father could enter into such a covenant, only one who truly and deeply valued eternal life with God above life on this earth could be party to such a contract. This was not a last-ditch plea or prayer of an anxious father, rather it was his whole belief system, his Faith, his life of faithful practice, all brought to bear and put on the line before God, who alone can enact such a covenant. Had God not accepted, I would not be here to tell the story. Would that every child were the product of such a covenant between their earthly and heavenly Fathers. My life, then, has just been the working out of this covenant; and as a middle term it could be said, I am this covenant.”

Co p. 12 “The idea of living my whole life with unanswered question was unacceptable. I felt my whole future depended on finding out, right now; without answers my life was on hold, a matter of continuous waiting. Then and there I determined to keep at the questions, keep thinking about them over and over, because if I didn’t figure things out for myself, nobody was going to do it for me. From the beginning, then, I put my whole heart and soul into a quest for answers, a quest that would become the driving force of my life – I wanted to know!”

Co p. 12 “The sea played a large part in the development of my spiritual life, it had a magnetic attraction, almost a physical pull. I was sure this personal attraction was on both sides, a kind of mutual bond I would come to know as ‘love’.”

Co p. 13 “Somehow I knew God was what I did not visibly see in nature. From then on to see God I had only to look out the window, or, if I was already outside, just stand quietly for a while and look – ‘gaze’, as dad put it.”

Co p. 14 “I took the seeing at the beach as a kind of proof that ‘what’ I was looking at (contemplating) in nature, was God. Had I not first ‘seen’ God, I don’t know that by merely ‘gazing’ at nature I would have known I was seeing Him at all. It seems one first has to see God before they can contemplate God, otherwise, they don’t really know what they’re looking at.”

Co p. 18 “But if I was not a believer, I was also not a disbeliever. Between the two lies the tester, someone who has to find out the truth for themselves, and this was me.”

Co p. 23 “Besides, by age seven I had already seen God in myself, and what I saw was definitely not myself!”

Co p. 24 “And to think that all this was sparked by Popeye’s profound words, ‘I am what I am and that’s all what I am’! For sure he had it right. Knowing ‘what’ we are (our self) is a thousand times more important than merely knowing ‘who’ we are (Popeye), or what we do in life (be a sailorman).”

Co p. 28 “So I ran to the back door, grabbed my sweater off its hook and bounded down the back stairs. I turned left to run through the side garden and around to the front when, a few steps beyond the stairs, suddenly from somewhere within myself, I felt a powerful rush like the swift blowing up of a balloon, I seemed to be expanding in all directions. I stopped, looked at my arms and legs to see if I was actually growing, yet I saw nothing unusual. Still, this powerful air – or whatever it was – kept expanding in all directions. For a moment I was seized with fear and thought to myself ‘I’m gonna bust!’ While I had no idea what would happen then, I suspected I might not be around to find out. Short of this happening, however, the expansion suddenly stopped. I waited in suspense, when, across my mind came the words, ‘You’re too big for yourself!’ after which the air diffused itself into a wild joy – wild because it was beyond me, uncontainable, not mine. (It was as if this ‘air’ had burst into laughter). After this, I felt it subside or draw back whence it had come – seemingly from somewhere in my body’s mid-section.”

Co p. 29 “Following this experience I was always aware of this Power, which seemed to have its own space within myself.”

Co p. 29 “A few years down the road I would refer to this experience as ‘The day I was born’ because it was so pivotal to

everything that followed, indeed, the experience opened up a whole new dimension in myself.”

Co p. “At one point she said, ‘Although God is already present in you, yet when you receive Holy Communion, God will be Present in a special way...’ Whatever she said after that, I don’t know, because the instant she said, ‘God is already present in you’ I felt a sudden leap within- something like what a mother might feel when the babe in her womb, suddenly kicks her. Instantly I knew: ‘that’s it! That’s what I had experienced, it was God!’”

Co p. 33 “After a few minutes, however, from within myself came a strong leap, a burst of what could only be called ‘laughter’ – felt something like a belly laugh. Though I did not laugh (there was nothing funny), yet it instantly swept away my gloom and problems as if they counted for nothing, as if they were even humorous. Not only was the gloom instantly dispelled, but in its stead was great joy. Indeed, life was beautiful! The message was clear and certain: It, the mysterious Power, was the only thing that mattered in my life, everything else didn’t matter, wasn’t worth the slightest concern. That’s what It wanted me to know, to learn, to keep in mind. Compared to Itself, everything else in life was merely external and irrelevant.”

Co p. 33. “Something else about this experience that can only be reported without comment, is that Its interior leap was accompanied by a spark of light over my head.”

Co p. 33 “From this time on I looked upon life as a game that could never be taken seriously...It was as if this Power said to me, ‘If I don’t care, why should you?’ ...Later, I would look back and realize that everything of importance I really knew about life and how to live it, I learned from this Power.”

Co p. 34 “Above all, I knew it was powerful, a power unto itself; it was also a small light in myself – sometimes, a very bright light. Because of its continued presence and seeming interest in me, I regarded it as a friendly, good Power. Because it apparently wanted me to learn certain things, it was also a teacher.”

Co p. 34 “so I closed my eyes, gazed intently within and urgently asked, ‘Are You there?’ The response I got was rather explosive, like a hard punch in the stomach I was knocked off balance and sent sprawling amid the garbage cans. Hearing the noise of the cans I was immediately caught, but for me, the game was over, I had to go down to the beach and think this over. The Power’s blow had been no laughing matter, it had meant business. I took it for a reprimand or warning of some kind.”

Co p. 35 “After a time, however, I realized I didn’t even have to look inside to see it; somehow, I knew of its continued Presence without having to look at all. I don’t know how I knew this, but I did. (In a way, I think I had a ‘feel’ for it).”

Co p. 39 “From now on, every night when I said my prayers I would end with this prayer: ‘God, I don’t know you and I don’t feel any love for you, but I hope someday I will know and love you. Please make this possible.’ I was faithful to this resolution for many years. There was something about being honest with God that always brought satisfaction – and ultimately, results.”

Co p. 40 “I chased Lee all over the dock, he had something coming to him and I was a good kicker!”

Co p. 43 “This experience was an eye-opener. Now I knew there was another dimension of life, a dimension so close you had only to sink into it. I knew, however, it would be impossible to live in this state

and in the world at the same time, for despite their closeness, one precluded the other; in a way, they were worlds apart. I determined, however, to seek it out, do whatever I could to have the experience again.”

Co p. 44 “Altogether this experience was a huge awakening, its relevance in my life was knowing this other dimension existed. Always it was before me as another possibility of life, a whole different existence. I was now on to a reality not of this world, yet somehow in this world. In this dimension it didn’t matter who you were or what you were, simple existence was everything. The mystery, of course, was the true nature of its delightful ‘medium’ – ‘what’ was it I had dissolved into – air, space, or what? I was convinced this dimension somehow underlay all creation, and that only human being lied in the harsh world of practical living – ‘reality’, as it is called.”

Co p. 44 “I had already come upon something greater, a state or dimension neither in nor of this world, and having come upon something better, I would never again seek what was lesser.”

Co p. 50 “I asked, ‘What is it about you I love so much?’ No sooner were my questions out then there came a swift rush or leap from withing and a brilliant ball of light stood before my eyes – about a foot above my forehead – a light so brilliant I couldn’t look at it directly. It identified itself as ‘love’ – the word imprinted on my mind. Somehow I knew this ball of fire was the love I experienced for the sea, ‘It’ was my connection to the sea, and ‘It’ would be my life, my future. After that, it vanished. I looked inside to see if my Friend was still there because, initially, I thought it had leaped out of me as was Itself the brilliant Light. But no, when I looked within, It was there as usual, seemed not to have moved at all. I could not think about what I saw, I could only express my stunned reaction by running down the beach with



everything in me crying out, 'I love you, I love you!' I ran clear to the Ocean Park pier before dropping from sheer exhaustion."

Co p. 50 "While I could never put my finger on exactly 'what' it was I loved, I knew it was both the mystery in the sea and the mystery in me, they were the same."

Co p. 55 "Sometime later, alone in Gert's room one day, I again experienced a sudden, powerful infusion of the interior power. Though similar to the first experience – several years earlier – this time I had no impression of physically expanding. Instead, only the Power expanded, and so such an overwhelming extent, it seems on the verge of taking me over completely. I froze faced with the immediate prospect of the Power wholly possessing me, taking me over...Without a doubt, this imminent treat was the most frightening moment of my life, there is no fear like it."

Co p. 55 "What I learned was not only that this Power could take me over any time it pleased, but that It wanted me to know this; and also to know it was not going to do so – not now anyway."

Co p. 56 "I figured it had always informed me of the truth, taught me the right attitude toward the ups and downs of life, opened up an inner dimension I wouldn't have known otherwise; it had been the source of knowledge and joy, even laughter; it had been a constant companion, and on account of its presence I would ponder the deeper things in life instead of what was merely passing and obvious. In short, it was actually teaching me, helping me grow up. While I decided it was really working on my behalf, I also determined to keep a respectful distance."

Co p. 56 "This knowledge came from outside myself, seemingly from an indistinct light in front of me. It was not given with words or

piece by piece, but instantly, all at once. It was almost like a blow to the head, because for a minute, at least, it felt as if my brain had frozen or become immovable. Since it was not conveyed with words -audible, interior or mental- nor imparted as an idea or concept, to convey this wordless knowledge it must be translated into words that can never do it justice. Although I would not call this an 'experience', it was nevertheless, mind-blowing."

Co p. 57 "From the beginning God had a specific Plan for my life; an unalterable Plan that would be accomplished regardless of me, my desires, my plans, or anything going on in my life. I would not die until this Plan had been completed, and some day this Plan would even be known to others. God had a specific work to do in me and was going to do it come hell or high-water (if I may use the expression). This grand Plan was to accomplish something very specific, something God wanted to do or bring about. All my unusual experiences to this point had been part of this Plan, God's own doing. So too, from here on all such experiences – for the rest of my life in fact – would be God's doing and part of His great Plan."

Co p. 57 "After this I would always think of myself as God's 'experiment' – too little of this, redo that, not enough here, whoops! Shouldn't have gone there... so went the great Plan and my life with God."

Co p. 58 "Mary would become the great provider in my life, so great in fact, I had to be careful what I asked of her, because I always got it. Thus, I was ever careful not to abuse her endless generosity."

Co p. 71 "When the water was up to my chest, seeing a wave coming, instead of jumping over it, I decided to go under. The instant my head went under my mind cleared – defrosted or returned – and everything in me cried out 'I'm myself!' 'I'm myself again!' The

surprise, the joy and jubilation was overwhelming. It was an unrepeatable experience that would forever be etched in the depths of my being. My beloved sea had done this for me, its inscrutable, magnetic mystery had been there for me! I never doubted God had worked this miracle, but not the God I didn't know or the one I had prayed to, no, it was God whose mystery is the sea, or sea whose mystery is God. This is the God who worked the miracle for me."

Co p. 91 "Sometimes when arguing I suddenly blurted out something profound that surprised me, something I had not known or even thought of. Sometimes it was as if a spark of light in the mind alerted me to some truth or something meaningful that I must pay attention to."

Ens p. 135 "In its utter transcendence it seemed not to notice me, and did not touch me in any way; it seemed only to be passing by. I was too stunned to feel anything and had been given no time to think, but one it passed, I felt a leap of joy that took me by surprise and instantly I knew what I had seen: it was God – finally I had seen him! [age 10 hiking in the Sierra Madre mountains] I had no doubts, not then, not ever; but the joy could not be contained. It spread over the boulder, tumbled into the stream below, overflowed its banks and climbed the trees to the sky. It was the experience of a lifetime. Just its remembrance, and everything else in life would fall away as if it were nothing, absolutely nothing."

Co p. 101 "I only know the light was so brilliant I couldn't see the forest. Either way, however, I know this light stunned my brain, stopped it completely. The second part is more easily describable: an instant after seeing the light, from within myself came an explosion of uncontainable joy, in one respect it reminded me of the balloon

experience five years before, only this time I understood it as a grace from God, a taste, as it were, of His own glory.”

Co p. 101 “If I learned anything at all it was this: see God and you will never be happy in this world again, never even be deeply interested in it. One glimpse of God will ruin your life forever. You will never again be able to put your heart, mind and soul into anything in this world.”

Co p. 102 “A few months later I was in Grauman’s Chinese theater watching a movie with two friends when again there came that forceful leap. I told my friends, ‘I gotta go!’ and ran out of the theatre to catch a glimpse of God’s passing. Though the magnificent sighting of God in the woods was never repeated, for the next four or five years I periodically experienced what I called its traces, tail-end or afterglow. Sometimes I saw more, sometimes less, but the effect was always the same: a profound love and longing for God, a quiet happiness, and uplifting, a momentary disinterest in the whole world. Equally amazing was the interior ‘leap’ system, and as long as that was all it did, its presence was fine with me. These experiences of God’s passing were never predictable, they could occur any time, any place, regardless of what I was doing or where I was.”

Co p. 102 “Apart from its sudden awakenings, it remained for the most part a quiet space within’ akin perhaps, to the notion of a sleeping giant, an aloof Power unto itself. I say ‘for the most part’ because there was one other way it could affect me, which was when it acted like a powerful magnet drawing my mind inward and downward into an unknowable silence and stillness within. Needless to say, I dearly wanted to know the true identity of this Power.”

Co p. 110 “Love, then, was not an emotion or a feeling, nor anything produced in our minds or intellect; rather, it was the soul’s power, it’s will, its determination, even its desire, for the highest Good,

namely, God. So love of God was our determined will to seek the Good, move toward it and do it, do God's will that is, because God's will was always for our own highest Good, namely, for God Himself."

Co p. 110 "From then on, for me, at least, love of God was a will-to-God. I practiced becoming ever more aware of this, aware of my own will, its presence in me. I even set out to see if it was possible to focus this inner power on God at all times. Indeed, finding out if this was possible, was the most profound goal I ever set for myself. Intuitively I knew that my will-to-God was the door to a profound mystery, a profound truth regarding God and myself. It was as if I'd suddenly learned the secret code to everything important in life and how to live it."

Co p. 110 "the will is not primarily the faculty of desire for anything known, but rather, the desire for something unknown, an innate longing for something that lies beyond ourselves, a longing for something we know is missing to us."

Co p. 117 "The wall, then, was not just a barrier to thinking, it was the end of it, period. Although the nature of this wall mystified me, I had a suspicion that beyond it lay great knowledge, not ordinary knowledge, but one that could penetrate the mystery of the universe, God, myself; I often wondered what my life would be like on the other side."

Co p. 117 "First there was the blank mind, then, a magnetic pull downward to the center of my being. My awareness was pulled downward, away from worldly awareness, even self-awareness. With my mind or awareness held to the depth – there seemed to be no further to go – what I encountered was not some 'thing', nor no 'thing', but just the opposite. At this mysterious depth was a pervasive sense of fullness, completion, an unemotional quiet joy, an other-worldly

state I sometimes thought as a gateway to heaven...This state could last 15-30 minutes before the force gradually subsided and I was able to pull out of it – get back to my usual self, that is. Afterwards, however, there was always a lingering aura or subtle trace of the experience that hung on for hours before it finally disappeared.”

Ens p. 101 [age 11] “After this I vowed never to go blank again. Yet sometimes the forceful pull inwards, to drop into this unknowable silence, was so strong that I had to get up, run, or do something to divert its influence.”

Co p. 118 “These experiences, however, reinforced my early belief I was destined to die young.”

Co p. 121 “There was simply no truth to such a notion. God had only wanted to know if I’d be willing to die to see Him, that’s all the dilemma had been about. I also knew that although I would, in fact, die when I saw God, it would not be out of terror and fear, but from His overwhelming glory. I was even convinced the sole cause of death, everyone’s death, was the vision of God. Thus I got the notion ‘see God and live’, which meant to me, the ability to sustain the vision without dying. I wanted my whole life to be a preparation for that great day – to ‘bear the vision’ and not die. Be carried into God’s glory without missing a beat.”

Co p. 124 “If for Paul and dad, keeping the faith was their triumphant goal, to be fully human, live fully, that would be my goal.”

Co p. 127 “I was sure that if anyone else had been there, they would have experienced it too. This radiant love was obviously not mine, it was God’s – indeed, it was God. I knew then, the love with which I loved Him was His own love, the same love wherein He loved

me. Because of this gift, I was now certain I could be a Carmelite, dedicate my whole life to loving God with the same love with which He loved me!”

Co p. 134 “A block or so after I stopped running, I experienced not just the familiar leap, but an explosion that knocked me off balance and left me sprawled on someone’s front lawn. I may never know how it actually worked or what exactly happened, I only know this much: the Power within seemed to burst out of me and stand before me as a blinding light, the wordless knowledge it conveyed went something like this – using my own words: ‘I am your true life, you belong only to me, I will have you’. This was no loving encounter, on the contrary, this Power meant business, it was definitive, almost scolding.”

Co p. 139 “In order to listen to the silence I let my mind go blank, but as soon as I did this, I experienced a forceful pull inward and downward to behold a blaze of light. On seeing this, it felt as if a dazzling meteor had struck the center of my being, and in that same instant, the window pane behind my head blew out, shattered into a million pieces. Everyone was startled, especially myself.”

Co p. 139 “While I had no physical explanation for the window, my impression of the experience was that God Passing by had descended (maybe even come through the window) and united with the Power within which caused a kind of explosion. That’s all I could think of. I was certain this experience was the two together, the Transcendent and Immanent and not simply one or the other.”

Co p. 147 “I felt I had been ushered into a dimension compared to which nothing else had any meaning whatsoever, an ethereal dimension free of mind, desires, emotions, everything.”

Co p. 147 “My whole being was pervaded by something unknowable, something I could only compare to a breeze because it was lightsome, gentle, exhilarating and refreshing. Above all, it engendered an overwhelming love of God, so much so, this breeze seemed to be love itself, a love no engendered by myself but by God. Though I didn’t know why I had this experience or what is purpose, no reason would have had any meaning anyway, because the experience was IT – an end in itself. It took about a week before this experience completely wore off, slowly it ebbed away until one day it was completely gone.”

Co p. 147 “Because this experience was a piece of heaven, I firmly believed I was destined to die young and God was just getting me ready- warning me in a way. Because I believed this, I wanted to live in constant readiness – as dad often told us kids: ‘Live each day as if it were your last’.”

Co p. 149 “Half way through his lecture, however, there came the familiar ‘leap’, instantly my whole body was poised to run outside to catch a glimpse of God passing by. This time, however, I held to the arms of the seat undecided whether to go or stay, when I saw God’s Passing anyway – as if through the room. Though I full expected this Passing to be as swift as a meteor, to my amazement It stood still as if deliberately hovering for a moment, so I shot out my questions ‘What is this in me that knows you? What is its connection to you?’”

Co p. 149 “The answer I received was not conveyed by any word or intellectual means, instead it was conveyed by what I saw, a knowledge by seeing alone. What I saw was the enactment or movements of God that conveyed a knowledge of how God works or how He manifests Himself, virtually moves to manifest Himself. In this movement I saw that God Passing by was also the Power within (my



Friend), One and the same God only two different Manifestations, hence, two different experiences.”

Ens p. 140 “I simply saw a unique coming together of the God without and the God within, the same identical cause, but a cause that gave rise to different manifestations which, in turn, gave rise to different experiences.”

Ens p. 140 “Now I understood why I loved them [hills, sky, animals] so much and what they had been trying to tell me all along. We were the same, we were one – all of us, vessels of God!”

Co p. 150 “That God’s presence in nature was the same as in me not only accounted for the mysterious affinity I had experienced with nature all my life, this same Presence was the Leap within, the interior Power, my old Friend – and God in the woods!”

Co p. 150 “I saw a kind of developmental progression, how God had been teaching me, preparing me at each step, I had not gone from one isolated, disconnected experience to another, on the contrary, each experience had been a step on a specific path.”

Co p. 152 “Every bedroom had a crucifix on the wall – about 18 inches or so – and sometimes I knelt there to say my rosary before bed. This night I knelt to pray God for an answer, and vowed not to get up until I received it. If I had to stay there the rest of my life, no matter, people would just have to come and physically remove me. I posed my question not to the crucifix, but to God transcendent (‘God-Without’; ‘God-of-the-woods’, or ‘God-Passing by’), after that, I waited in silence. I did not have to wait long before high up behind the wall somewhere, came a swift, straight, brilliant beam of light that passed downward through the center of the crucifix and on into the center of myself. I

was hit with such force I fell backward against the maple bed post, it was as if I'd been struck by lightning. Instantly I recognized the Trinity – God Transcendent, 'God Passing by' (the Father); God Immanent, the Power within (the Holy Spirit); and between the two, Christ. Though I had blessed myself ('In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit') thousands of times and knew the Trinity to be the lofty mystery of God, I had never given it any real thought – indeed, dad often said the Trinity was 'unthinkable'. Seeing the Trinity in this light, however, it not only took on meaning in my life, it became central to it. But as regards Christ's place in the Trinity and what he revealed of God's mystery, I was a complete blank. It bothered me that the Light had passed through Christ, after all, he had no place in my life or experiences, I never thought of Him, never felt any need for him. So what was he doing in the Trinity, what was his role? Above all, what did his place in the Trinity mean to me? I could not think of a thing."

Co p. 152 "But no sooner had I reached this point, when something came into my mind from the outside – above my head on the pillow – which informed me:

'Christ in the Trinity stands for you and all creation, He is your true and eternal connection to God, the link between God Within and Without. His humanity is the vessel, the meeting place where God withing and without have fruition and become One so that everything created and uncreated is united and One. To know this same fruition as Christ knew it, the vessel must be perfect as he is perfect. Christ is the medium through which the vessel (me) could become one with its content (God). Transformed into Christ, His place in the Trinity is also your eternal place in the Trinity.'"

Co p. 153 "To me it was a complete revelation, the whole plan of God in a nut shell, ingenious, magnificent and definitive. Christ was not

merely a medium between God Within and Without (Father and Spirit), rather, He represented all creation' inclusiveness in God's Oneness."

Co p. 153 "Here now, after years of knowing I was not a Christian, there came the happy thought, 'Now I'm a Christian!' But no sooner had this thought entered my mind than it was instantly blown out: 'No, you are not a Christian yet, you are only becoming one.'" Though a bit sobering, I understood perfectly."

Ens p. 133 "Under this gaze [from a life-sized crucifix in her local church at age 11] I asked my questions, but barely got them out before a sense of some unknown tragedy swept over me like a wave that washed away my questions as if they didn't count, as if they were meaningless, childish. It was not a sense of pity or sorrow, but a sense of tragedy so profound as to be inexpressible and totally un-understandable. Suddenly it occurred to me that maybe nobody really understood his death or even his message, and it was this, not his physical suffering, that was the real tragedy: nobody understood him!"

Co p. 153 "As I way it, no one could fully know Christ until they had been fully transformed into Him, until then, everything known of Christ was incomplete."

Co p. 154 "I was also well educated in my Faith, familiar with the lives of the saints, in short, prior to my conversion everything was in place. Like a fledgling bird I had only needed a push to fly, and my conversion was that push. Once I took off, I never looked back, never hesitated or harbored a doubt; I knew my direction, knew the way, and just as the bee flies, I headed straight for my eternal home in the Trinity."

Co p. 156 “In short, I would never feel any need for the historical Christ, even though I realized that without His incarnation we would never have known the Trinity and God’s plan for creation. It would be several years before I came across the term ‘Logos’ used for the divine Christ, it would have been helpful if I had known this term earlier because I would have recognized it as the term for the divine Christ in the Trinity – as set apart from the purely human, historical man Jesus.”

Co p. 163 “I know the exact moment I was freed from my miserable condition [of scruples]. I believe it was on the night of the third day (after the reversal) I experienced a sudden release comparable, perhaps, to having a load lifted from your soul accompanied by a surging sense of joyful freedom. I recognized the hand of God in this release because I had experienced it before – and would experience it a number of times again. It was as if God had said, ‘Enough of this!’ and that was that.”

Co p. 164 “Finally, however, I reached a point where I could not discern what I really liked or disliked any more, and at this point my ascetic practices didn’t do anything for me, they did not seem to bring about any progress or make any difference to my interior estate. From here on, come what may, I could take it or leave it.”

Co p. 170 “Besides, from the age of seven I was convinced I would die young, so there was no use even looking down the road.”

Co p. 173 “From the time of my conversion [age 15] God had showered me with many graces – no two alike – the most important being some new knowledge of God and/or myself. There were also a few outstanding graces wherein their full relevance was not understood for many years. While in the years to come the following experience would become a kind of gauge of my interior progress, at the time it occurred, however, I did not know this – could not have known it.”

Co p. 174 “Kneeling alone in the quiet school Chapel, a great force came down on top of my head that stopped my brain and all its functions. I could not move my mind, a superior force, strong as steel, but light as a cloud, had overpowered it. It felt as if giant hands were holding my mind in a vise. I looked upward a little over my head to see a shaft of light a few feet before me. It seems a wide ray of this light had come down and penetrated my mind with a force that held it immobile.”

Co p. 174 “I took for granted I had experienced a foretaste of a state down the road, most probably reserved for heaven, since such a condition was obviously not compatible with continued life on earth.”

Co p. 174 “The next time this occurred – six months to a year later – while my mind was immobilized, the force was not as heavy and only accompanied by a dust of light that permeated my mind – no external, brilliant Light. Over the years I periodically had this experience and noticed the ever-lessening degree of force or power it took to immobilize my mind. Finally the day came when it hardly took any force at all.”

Co p. 192 “No, there was no explanation for being singled out at an early age. Though I never doubted He was equally at work in others, I had never heard of His working in such a mysterious, yet overt, persistent manner. The only hint of a reason I could come up with was that from the beginning, God knew I would never be an easy believer, that I was incapable of accepting any truth I could not verify for myself or come to know through my own experiences.”

Ff p. 120 “This reminds me of something I learned as a 15 yr. old reading St. Teresa’s Mansions. When I got to her description of ‘Mystical Marriage’ (a unitive state) I understood it perfectly, recognized it as my own present experience, but then I thought, ‘Is this

all there is to the spiritual life?’ Impossible! So I snapped the book shut – ‘There has got to be more to the spiritual life than this!’

[After her conversion experience at age 15, she entered a Discalced Carmelite convent at age 17 and permanently lost her ego a few months later. The following quotes refer to a soul with no ego, but not yet no Self.]

The Path to No-Self:

Pns p. 85 “Then one day I was given the man-in-the-airplane treatment [age 17 and in the monastery] and was shoved out without any attachments. That there was no great splat attests to the miracle of the unitive state. It is like the butterfly emerging from the cocoon: there is fear and unknowing before it suddenly discovers it can fly, discovers that this is what its transformation was all about, and that to fly is the essence of its mature life.”

[God made us with the ability to get addicted, then tolerates us getting addicted to spiritual experiences (all the while being present beyond the experiences), then tries to ween us off our spiritual addictions.]

Pns p. 26 “Although, now and then, a divine sense of humor relieves the continuous tension between God and soul, the frightening truth is that God is not playing games with man: He is in dead earnest, and He intends to hold man to his true destiny, come what may.”

Pns p. 39 “There is a link, of course, between will and emotions; in fact, the will stands in a unique position as mediator between mind and emotions. Yet the emotions belong always and forever to the self,

while the will has the capacity of being equally to God and the self as a kind of shared faculty.”

Pns p. 78 “So great are these advanced glimpses, and so great is the disparity revealed between this life and the next state, that we desire either to die or to have no more such glimpses. But, if not destined to move immediately into the next life, we must then be given a new direction in this one.”

Pns p. 83 “It is to affirm and return God’s love that the soul desires to endure every trial and suffering within human limits...it is in the exercise of this union that its true glory breaks through and His face appears. And the tougher the exercise, the clearer the vision.”

Pns p. 84 “What I saw was how God was the eternal movement, which meant more than that God moves; it also meant: this is what God is – namely, movement. Years before, I had seen God as Existence, and later, as Everywhere.” (Spirit, Transcendent, Logos)

Pns p. 86 “Rather, it is the movement of both a subtle power and an unknowable, unfathomable intelligence. No one else is moving in us; we only move at all because God moves us, for outside God no movement is possible.”

Pns p. 89 “True virtue does not arise from feelings, but from the strength at the center which needs no feeling to act. During the transformation, a shift occurred whereby acts are now either spontaneous – that is they bypass both feeling and knowing – or arise from knowledge and no longer from feelings.”

Pns p. 91 “Hundreds of examples can be given of how the unitive state works; the point here is to show how it is a deeply joyful state, and in no way stoical or uncaring; indeed, when you are so well taken care of yourself, your first concern is for the other. It is a state that

knows no anger, revenge, jealousy, greed and those hundred-and-one feelings indicative of self-centeredness.”

[You just have to be able to do one thing, and this will all make sense. You just have to be able to see deeply enough into your depths where there is something there that is not you. It was before you, and will be after you, but it is not you. If you can experience that, then the rest of this follows logically.]

Pns p. 94 “We said something about the modification of the affective system, and how clarity of mind takes precedence, so that doing stems from knowing and seeing, not from feeling. This is the result of becoming established in our true center (God), and having put behind us the false center (emotions). The turning point of the unitive life is the emergence of the flame, or great energy, at the center, which is not only the source of virtue, but virtue itself. To reveal the full strength of this union – the soul’s cementedness to God – there is need of continual trials and tests of every kind, because from this exercise arises the revelation of ‘that’ which lies behind the door at the center.”

Pns p.99 “Some transformed souls will be likeable and others will not, but one thing they have in common is that they do not care if they are liked or not. These souls, we are told (by St. John of the Cross), execute their works ‘without thought of what others will say or how their work will appear,’ and the saint adds, ‘few spiritual persons reach such daring and determination in their works’ (Spiritual Canticle, Stanza 29) Few, that is, dare to be themselves without putting on roles or playing social games. What the deified soul is, then, is a soul that is authentic, whole, natural, spontaneous, fearless, and strongly itself in every event and situation God has not fashioned a wimp, weasel, or robot.”



Pns p. 102 “The way forward, then, is to exercise the great gifts of the unitive life, to take all the risks, stretch the human potential, and allow God to save us every day, every moment of our lives.” [We have to trust God enough to be able to say, ‘O.k. I know you’ve got this. I will let go.’]

Pns p. 104 “Thus it is not ‘I’ who love God; rather, it is God loving himself. In other words, what God loves in me is Himself, and ‘that’ in me which loves God, is also Himself. To completely realize the truth of this insight comes very close to doing away with the self altogether, for if ‘I’ do not love God, then what good am I? How am I needed or necessary? The day we see the full implication of what this means, we are getting close to the final demise of the self; with this demise, there is not union remaining, and therefore no further need for equality of love. Thus, one way out of the problem of equality of love is to have no equality at all. God loving Himself is the only equality there is.”

[We become less afraid of ‘Other’ as we become less desirous of self.]

Pns p. 106 “To see God we need only be prepared, and this preparation is what the unitive life is about.”

Pns p. 107 “The self, however, was that which created a boundary, that which was bound, that which could be fortified and stretched. But without a self there is only the Limitless – the Infinity.”

Pns p. 109 “The remarkable aspect of this vision is seeing how God moves all things and, at the same time, how all things move in God, and because of this ‘common movement’, all seems to be God. Earlier it was seen how God was the immanent moving force in all that is created, but here the soul sees something more: it sees how all things live and move and have their being in God, so that between the created

and uncreated there is oneness of movement and existence...(then she quotes St. John of the Cross)...Here we see the created within the uncreated as neither separate nor apart; rather, they are one and move as one.”

Pns p. 114 “this faith is the truth of God as He is in Himself and not as He is in ‘my’ self; it is a faith that comes after seeing and not before...This tells us we must go beyond the intellect if we are to lay hold of truth, and this laying-hold is what I regard as mature faith...The only difference was that I now had the faith of the butterfly and not of the caterpillar; a mature faith derived from seeing, experiencing, and transformation which was now free from self and in no way dependent upon it.”

Pns p. 116 “After this, however, the point of light seemed to explode and become all of this human form but the external husk. I saw how God was indeed my very life and breath, and that Christ, as the true self, was the inner strength, the will-to-God, the essence of the new man – the butterfly itself. Obviously, God had only withdrawn Himself as an interior object of vision in order to reveal Himself on yet a more subjective, everyday level. At the same time, it was clear that the true nature of all dark nights is God’s moving progressively underground in order to take over our deepest subjective experience of personal being; this is how transformation works.”

Pns p. 116 “Apart from its revelation, Christ’s subjectivity is difficult to realize on an intellectual level; this is because Christ, as the subjective self, is not the historical Christ, but rather, the formless, mystical, eternal Christ, the Christ of grace, transformation, and the Eucharist. As the human manifestation of God, Christ is more subjective to us than the Holy Spirit, which has no human manifestation, and therefore remains as the objective still point, or

light at the center. Thus, despite their unity, Christ as the subjective vessel and the Spirit as its objective interior focal point are two different experiences of God.”

Pns p. 117 “We often take him for the still point, the center of being, the Holy Spirit; this is all right, since they are one, but it still falls short of God’s purely human manifestation in ourselves. The failure to overcome this duality and realize this identity is a great stumbling block that keep us from realizing in what way Christ is manifest in us, here and now, as our true self.”

Pns p. 117 “This relinquishing was Christ’s own experience on the Cross and thus, when our true self dies, it is Christ giving up his self all over again; it is Christ that descends into hell (the great void) and Christ that rises again. What man ordinarily thinks of as his ‘self’ is totally incapable of such a feat. Only Christ can take us through this passage; only he can save us and return us safely to the Father. Thus, the first movement is the transformation of self into Christ, and the second movement, Christ’s return to the Godhead.”

Pns p. 120-21 “The mature unitive stage is a recapitulation of Christ’s active life, a life that led to his death, an unusual death in that it was more than his physical dissolution; rather, it was the type of death that led to the resurrection – the eternal vision beyond self. The mature unitive life, then, is the preparation for this death, the death of the Christ-self – the unitive self. However nondual and subjective the unitive center, it is still an object of consciousness in that we can reflect on our union with God – just as Christ did. As stated elsewhere, death of the unitive self is the death of both God and self as reflective objects of consciousness, followed by the birth of God as pure subjectivity, God’s own way of knowing all that exists – the Eye seeing Itself. It is

this transition between God-as-object and God-as-subject that takes place between Cross and Resurrection.”

Pns p. 126 “With this recognition, he begins to understand that this flame has another purpose altogether, which is to burn him out through his very inability to express it.”

Pns p. 127 “In this was I saw that self cannot truly express God by any efforts of its own; only God can express Himself. What this is saying is that the unitive self is not an adequate expression of God; it cannot, in fact, express Him at all. In turn, I am convinced that this is why it was necessary for Christ to give up his unitive self on the cross – because it was only this way, without a self, that he could become the adequate expression of God. Without the self, he could effect in us what he could not effect as long as self remained.”

Pns p. 129 “As long as his human self remained, it would always be an object to us – in the same way all selves are objects. Thus, he had to relinquish that self in order to reveal his subjectivity, his oneness with us. And it is the Spirit that lights up this subjectivity, reveals it to us, and enables us to understand it. Thus, the Spirit is Christ’s gift to us and Christ is the Spirit’s gift to us. Every way we look at it, it is all God’s gift of Himself to man, pressed down on us and overflowing. Indeed, everywhere we turn, everywhere we look, God is revealing Himself.”

Pns p. 132 “I saw I was indeed dying to all sense of personal existence, but at the same time the inner flame rose up – it reminded me of the angel’s flaming sword guarding the door to paradise – and seemed to forbid any fear to enter. Within this great flame was a small, flickering, helpless flame – my self – and I could see it was about to be extinguished – hence the fear. But the greater flame which prohibited any fear to enter indicated one thing to me: let the self die, let it go, do nothing about it, let everything be as it is. I knew then the dying self

was all in God's mysterious plan; it was His will, and because it was His will all things would be well."

Pns p. 137 "Thus one sign that the unitive stage is coming to an end is the eventual failure of anything – even the greatest of trials – to challenge the unified self anymore. This indicates we have come a long way, run our course to the finish, and come through with such an unshakable trust in God that we are beyond the very need for trust. Life with God is so taken for granted, such a totality of our lives that the very need to think of Him is a lack of trust itself."

Pns p. 137 "The essence of the unitive life, then, is the gradual imperceptible death of the self, a death made possible because the self is secured, anchored in God so that it has no fear of living fully, accepting all the suffering, heartaches, and trials that come its way. The mechanism of the self's dying is built into its life with God – we give all, He takes all, and when all is gone, He alone remains. Without this unitive life we cannot possibly give up the self; there would not be sufficient security, love, trust, or even a sufficient reason to do so."

Pns p. 139 "The deeper self is too well taken care of to be a consideration; there is no need to make a choice between me or you."

Pns p. 143 "To the question of why St. Teresa and other saint did not come upon a further transformation, or a more radical change of consciousness, we can only answer that it was not the will of God. There is no reason to suspect that, on their part, the saints were lacking in fortitude, generosity, or the psychological stamina necessary for this further movement."

Pns p. 144 "From this description [of Henry Suso] it is obvious that a state exists beyond union where no duality between God and self is experienced; duality only reappears when the mystic falls back into

ordinary consciousness. This tells us that consciousness is responsible for man's experience of duality, and that such a consciousness has no place in eternal life."

Pns p. 145 "To my knowledge, this interval [between the third and final stages] has never been accounted for in contemplative literature. And until it is accounted for, and understood, there will never be acceptance of a permanent state of no-self as a reality."

Pns p. 146 "Nevertheless, people will go on asking this question [who?] because they cannot separate physical presence from a self, or a self from sin. What they know in themselves is what they see in others, and there lies the unbridgeable gap, a terrible gap in understanding that will persist so long as self remains."

Pns p. 147 "The reality of no-self, however, can only be frightening to a watered-down Christianity, to an easy path of faith, and to a contemplative path that has mistaken the midpoint for the final goal. Yes, indeed, the permanency of an 'exanimated' soul is an experience to be reckoned with!"

Pns p. 148 "And what passes away is not only God and self as objects of consciousness, but, surprisingly, the sense of self as subject of consciousness. The glory of the resurrection was Christ's realization of God as pure subjectivity, and his identity as all that is manifest of the Father."

Pns p. 149 "Christ, however, broke this silence [of Buddha] to become the light in the void, and to reveal to us yet another dimension of existence, the resurrection and its particular type of 'seeing' – the same whereby God sees Himself."

Pns p. 150 "The great plan was to bring everyone to the unitive state because, once we get this far, Christ takes over; 'what' goes

beyond the self is obviously not the self; rather, it is Christ's subjectivity that remains when the self falls away. Thus when the self dies or disappears it is Christ's journey all over again; it is the same vision and the same resurrection."

Pns p. 150 "To live on, there but one purpose, namely, to verify the resurrection as the true and final end of the unitive life – just as it was the verification of Christ's unitive life on earth. At the same time, it verifies and duplicates in a lesser form Christ's own experience, and helps bring to light the true nature of his death, while allowing us to participate in the tremendous realization that took place at the resurrection. Apart from this, the state beyond self has not other place, purpose, or meaning in this world."

Pns p. 156 "Striving for the open is vital to the unitive life because it means stepping outside the self and our unconscious habitual ways of thinking and judging. In some respects, it means putting aside the content of personal consciousness, which seems to be a necessary preparation for eventually going beyond the personal or 'I' consciousness."

Pns p. 157 "The idea of stepping outside this [Catholic] referent, however, struck me as somewhat risky, for it occurred to me I might possibly lose my faith. But in putting the question to God, in the very moment of doing so, I had my answer. God is already outside my mental structure; He exists without it."

Pns p. 160 "I discovered the true key to the open mind was nothing more than the cessation of judgment itself."

Pns p. 161 "Until we can step outside ourselves, there can never be communication with others or any level of understanding between

us, and without this, no relationship is possible, we are no more than physically present to one another.”

Pns p. 161 “In leaving others free we also become free, and in this mutual freedom there is true relationship and communication. But to give this freedom to others, we must first be secure within ourselves, and the purpose of the unitive life is to give this security, give this necessary freedom.”

Pns p. 166 “It never occurred to me that beyond self-consciousness was a new type of knowing, and that my fears were without foundation.”

Pns p. 169 “When the thermostat was turned up, there came with it an energy never encountered before, a problematic energy in that it gave rise to a rash of extraordinary experiences, such as mind over matter, levitation, out-of-the-body experiences, foreknowledge, knowledge of others, and even the possibility of healing. Whatever the true nature of these energies, it was obvious they wanted to reach to the outside and find expression. I felt about to be used as a medium for these powers, and what this meant, I had no idea.”

Pns p. 173 “in putting down this interior energy, I was unknowingly getting ready to live without any interior energy; for in the state of no-self there is nothing left that could be called interior energy. This does not mean that all interior energy is from the self. Once the self is put down, the burning flame remains, but it is an energy we cannot claim as our own, thus only God can put out this flame. And He does.”

Pns p. 175 “It would also be the reason why the extraordinary saints and mystics did not go on to tell us about the state of no-self, which lies beyond all such energies and experiences. These energies



run contrary to the great silence of God, and contrary to a permanent loss-of-self.”

Pns p. 178 “The bondage of spirit is not the body; rather, it is a type of consciousness – self-consciousness – that creates an apparent division. What makes for a sense of unity is this division. Thus when self-consciousness falls away, no such division exists, and therefore no unity exists. Without this consciousness, the spirit is no longer hampered by the body, and there results a sense of formlessness, a certain lack of body awareness – even though the body remains. This means that the true division in man is not between body and spirit, but between two states of seeing – the difference between self and no-self. Thus the body constitutes no obstacle for realizing higher states...It is a surprise to realize we can have the beatific vision while in the body.”

Pns p. 182 “Every disruption portends the onset of another circular movement up the spiral. This is the true nature of every dark night and every disruption at the center. It is all a period of preparation.”

Pns p. 183 “Later I saw how this worked; I understood that God is in things only because all things are in Him, and thus with God on the inside and God on the outside, God is a flow-through, flowing freely through all that exists; and even ‘that’ which He flows through is part of the great flow. Self puts up a barrier to this flow-through of God; it stands, as it were, between God on the inside and God on the outside.”

Pns p. 184 “So too, we do not know God as subject as long as the subjective and objective poles of self-consciousness remain...To know God purely in Himself, and with no self takes a new type of ‘seeing’ and a radical change of consciousness. Until we come upon this change, we cannot understand what it means: God loving Himself in Himself and not in ‘ourselves’.”

Pns p. 186 “do we really trust Him with our life? Can we dare to abandon all? Are we ready to surrender every last thing we could ever call a self? Like St. Peter, perhaps we jump up and respond: yes, of course we can! But when we see the cross of self-extinction down the road, we turn and skip town.”

Pns p. 189 “bliss awaits those who can possibly make it through the tragedy of what has happened to Christ in the Church.”

Pns p. 192 “It is understandable, however, that no one wants to deal with self-extinction; it is too frightening, we put it down as abnormal, and give it no place in the true scheme of things. But if properly understood, self-extinction is man’s ultimate salvation; otherwise, we would be stuck in ourselves for all eternity and never see God, who is beyond the self. This would be hell.”

Pns p. 195 “When the unitive life falls away, however, we do not suddenly become God; God does not suddenly disappear. All that happens is that we finally take our rightful place with Christ in the Trinity as part and parcel of God – God manifest. The ultimate realization of no-self is not its identity with Father or Holy Spirit – the omniscient unmanifested Father or the omnipotent manifesting Spirit – rather it is the realization of our true nature, our true identity as the manifest aspect of the Trinity – Christ in this breakthrough.”

Pns p. 200 “In other words, to go beyond the self, we must first realize the self in its oneness with God, because in the exercise of this unitive self lies the mechanism of transcending the self, of going beyond it to realize Christ’s final destiny. Union first, then death and resurrection. This was the way Christ showed us; this was the movement of his life.”

Pns p. 202 “The obvious purpose of this accelerated movement is to realize more quickly the full unitive state, in order to move on to the final emptying of self – to go through Christ’s own experience of death and resurrection. This is why the calling to the contemplative life is the greatest of human destinies, and why half-measures are the greatest of human tragedies.”

Pns p. 205 “but a million times more important is our awareness of every interior movement and change, even the most subtle, because this is where it is at, this is where the Spirit is continually moving us, transforming and informing us in its own particular way. This is where we will learn everything we ever need to know, and to do this, we must clear our minds of everything else.”

Pns p. 206 “All that is attained in the unitive state is the ability to live our lives as God originally intended – that is, in oneness and partnership with Him. Any other view is blowing it out of proportion, making it into something it was never intended to be, making it a final goal instead of a midway point.”

Pns p. 208 “I find it incredible that anyone believes that realization of union is the rare experience of a few privileged. Christ’s message and grace is not for a handful of rare specimens...”

Pns p. 209 “But this is why the supernatural effects of union can only be known in the exercise of the unitive state (and not merely in the unitive state itself)- or when the going gets tough. Even then, it becomes natural to us, which is why the trials have to become tougher – as they usually do. It is in the very testing of this indissoluble bond that the self is dying while, imperceptibly, God is filling the empty space.”

Pns p. 211 “From here on, the glory of the unitive life can only be known in its fearless exercise, which means the full acceptance of our humanity and selfhood. Here we must literally lay ourselves and our unitive life on the line as if daring the forces of hell to separate us from God. This alone is the way forward to the final emptying, to the loss of everything that can be called a self.”

Pns p. 213 “We do not go beyond the self because it is worthless, self-centered, and of no value. On the contrary, this self is God-given and, for a time, is part of our humanity, it serves a great purpose. Yet self as an interior energy and a self-conscious way of knowing stands in the way of pure vision, and therefore must ultimately be relinquished.”

Pns p. 213 “Because the nature of human consciousness can only know God as object, this was the way Christ, too, knew God: the Father without, the Spirit within. As the vessel containing the Spirit, Christ stands midway between the two, and thereby reveals to us the Trinitarian nature of God.”

Pns p. 213 “Christ alone can span the void beyond object and subject; this is his return journey to the Godhead, which he repeatedly makes for each one of us. It is a journey beyond self and the unitive life, wherein the unitive bond dissolves to reveal that its underlying reality is the Trinitarian bond between Father, Son, and Spirit. Thus union ultimately gives way to the greater reality of the Trinity – the Oneness of the Godhead.”

#### From The Experience of No-Self:

Ens p. 13 “The reflexive mechanism of the mind – or whatever it is that allows us to be self-conscious – is cut off or permanently suspended so the mind is ever after held in a fixed now-moment out of which it cannot move in its uninterrupted gaze upon the Unknown.”

Ens p. 14 “they have confused these two movements by failing to adequately distinguish between them; that is, to distinguish between a radical *change* of consciousness and the *cessation* of consciousness; between going beyond first, the lower (ego) self, and later, the higher True Self; between union with God, and God beyond union.”

Ens p. 23 [regarding the no ego event] “So I decided that Christ WAS the joy, the emptiness itself; He was all that was left of this human experience. For days I walked with this joy that, at times, was so great, I marveled at the flood gates and wondered how long they would hold.”

Ens p. 31 “Then, under the cypress tree on the day already mentioned, I consumed the host and saw all things were in Go, that he was closer and more personal than I ever dared to expect. To suddenly realize you live and walk in God is a unique discovery that forever dispels the sense of loss that ensues when the feeling of a personal life falls away.”

Ens p. 31 “I might add that among the many notions that had to be abandoned was my notion of abandonment itself. It was not I, who had abandoned the self to God, rather it was God who had abandoned the self completely; and once beyond the self, everything goes, even “that” which I had expected would remain.

Ens p. 33 “It seems I had first to move through the personal and then the impersonal before I realized God was closer than either and beyond them both.”

Ens p. 35 “until I went to the mountains [camping for five months] I had never truly lived. Not for a single day in my life had I ever lived before. Without a doubt I was in the Great Flow, so totally at one with

it that every notion of ecstasy, bliss, love and joy, pale by comparison to the extraordinary simplicity, clarity, and oneness of such an existence.”

Ens p. 36 “it became impossible for the mind to perceive or retain any individuality when all visual objects either faded from the mind, gave way to something else, or were “seen through” – I do not know which is the best description to use. I might also add, I do not understand the mechanism of this change in perception, yet I regard this change as one of the most significant events in the entire journey. It not only remained as a permanent irreversible fixture of perception, but it seemed to be the necessary vehicle by which I eventually came to the final ‘seeing’.”

Ens p. 37 “This is the very nature of our life’s movement: to expand, to open up and blossom.”

Ens p. 38 “Besides the body, all that was left was just this seeing and yet, even this did not really belong to me for it was not localized anywhere in my mental or physical make-up, but instead, seemed to be on top or a little above my head – toward the front and over the forehead. Although I continued to refer to this seeing as my wonderful glasses – because of the extra dimensional aspect – I was sure this seeing was actually outside the ordinary mind and physical body as well.”

Ens p. 38 “Thus for the adult, seeing may be a kind of return to this original form of consciousness, a form that surprisingly does not seem to hamper the ordinary activities of practical living. Therefore, in the process of reverting back to our original consciousness we have to learn how to live without any self-consciousness – the build-up of a lifetime perhaps – which is not an easy adjustment to make. But it’s exciting to think we can make it at all, and even more exciting to think

of what would happen if every man could live as he was originally intended to live.”

Ens p. 42 “I stood looking out over the valley, gazing at nothing in particular, when I noticed a peculiar gathering of intensity in the air somewhere over the valley. Whatever it was, it was gathering itself together from all parts and in doing so, was expanding outwards, obliterating everything in its path. At the same time, it grew to such a pitch of vibratory, almost electrical, intensity that it exerted a magnetic pull on my body.”

Ens p. 47 “Thus in these moments, surrounded by a terror I could not feel, and from which I could not escape, I seemed doomed to remain in the unlivable condition of having to stare out at a horrible nothingness without a single [rational] weapon of defense.”

Ens p. 49 “The bookstores, however, were as quiet as a library and in these places, I didn’t spend much time, but squeezed myself into one of the noisy cafes and ordered a beer. While sitting there watching the people around me, I decided that having no-self was as bad, if not worse, than having a self.”

Ens p. 50 “To give one’s self to God is one thing, but to have him accept it, is a terrible thing – or so I now understood.”

Ens p. 53 “I could not keep running from this thing all my life, I had to get it out in the open, face it head-on and deal with it, because I could no longer stand its continual lurking around every corner of my day. I decided to go outside, sit on the hillside, and stare it in the face until one of us gave way – or went away.”

Ens p. 55 “I was not aware of the moment when the dreadful thing departed, for the next thing I was aware of was a profound stillness wherein there was no physical sensation at all. After a while,

something must have turned my head because I found myself looking eye-level at a small, yellow wild flower no more than twelve inches away. I cannot describe that moment of seeing, words could never do it justice. Let us just say it smiled – like a smile of welcome from the whole universe.”

Ens p. 56 “Thus I climbed the hill the same as I had gone down the hill, but only physically, for in reality, something had gone down the hill that never returned.”

Pns p. 111 “Evidently the requirement to bear the vision is a sense of formlessness or bodilessness which does, in fact, characterize the later transformation and become a permanent state of affairs.”

Ens p. 57 “I suggested [to monk Father L] that man’s notion of matter-versus-spirit might turn out to be the reverse of what it has traditionally been thought to be; namely, God might turn out to be pure matter or permanent substance, and matter might turn out to be pure spirit or God; in other words, matter and spirit may actually be identical.”

Ens p. 58 “Because form itself is composed of an unknowable, untouchable substance that remains permanent throughout all change, it seemed to me it was this substance that remained in the absence of self.”

Ens p. 61 “it soon felt as if my brain was on fire or that some terrible pressure behind the eyes was forcing me to go blind. This relentless pressure in my head was like a terrible taskmaster constantly commanding me to ‘See! You MUST see! You CAN see!’ It pounded away day after day, week after week, month after month, until I knew I would never be released from this horrible condition or escape the terrible taskmaster unless I did, eventually, ‘see’.”



Ens p. 65 “A few days or weeks, okay, but almost four full months of being in a mental straitjacket verged day after day on the brink of the intolerable.”

Ens p. 67 “All this and more, suddenly became overwhelming, and under its monstrous weight, something collapsed. Whatever remains without a self, disintegrated, melted away like the thinnest veil to the infinite. It was the obliteration of all but the joyous, humorous smile of the divine, a smile that somehow was completely subjective. Its most poignant, immediate word of description was ‘melting’ – a veritable melting in which God was all that remained.”

Ens p. 71 “So this was the end of the line. I had finally come upon the great truth: that all was void; that self had merely filled in the void.”

Ens p. 75 “Once I realized that what Is can never be an object to Itself (and thus, never a subject), I had the marvelous and unique key to seeing it all the time – which was by not looking at all.”

Ens p. 78 “The free one is now gone, and that which remains now walks the beam like an unthinking tree must grow and function in a direction already set by its nature, a nature so intelligent that it is forever completely unknowable to the human mind...In other words, what to do is built into the beam itself so that doing is identical with its content or what it does.”

Ens p. 81 “the reason nothing in particular is beautiful is because the beauty of what Is overshadows the particularity of all form. Thus visible form is bypassed or overshadowed by the ‘thing in Itself’. Then too, we no longer need to see or possess beauty when we are truly a part of it, or are already possessed by it.”

Ens p.91 “The true nature, then, of what remains beyond self is Eternal Form – the act and manifestation of the formless and unmanifest.”

Ens p. 98 “In reality, however, non-thinking produces mere nothingness, whereas a silent mind is not a blank mind.”

Ens p. 99 “the thoughts that now come to mind do not arise from within, but from the outside or ‘off the top’ so to speak, and then, only when dealing with the obvious data at hand at any given moment.”

Ens p. 105 “It seems that from the day we are born, or from the day that self begins to develop, we are getting ready for a life without a self. It is as if the mechanisms of self-preservation and self-extinction are living in balance and guiding us to our true destiny. And if the former predominates in the first half of life, it is the latter that comes to fore in the second half where no-self becomes the true, preserving force.”

Ens p. 106 “there seems to exist a fullness of act that does not fall into the known or created, and to be overcome by this fullness means that at any moment, all we know to exist may easily, instantly and painlessly, be dissolved into what Is. I do not understand this mechanism, but I do know this dissolution, this enduring intensity, is the ending and the last of all silences.”

Ens p. 110 “Once beyond the passageway, however, there was no seeing of either Oneness or multiplicity, only the seeing of what Is, which is beyond the relative plane and, therefore, beyond even the One and the many. Thus on a strictly non-relative plane, what Is is the Eye seeing itself and wherever it looks it sees only Itself and nothing else.”

Ens p. 115 “Thus, when we can look in the mirror and not experience the great disappointment, but can say instead, ‘everything

is as usual and nothing has changed' then, perhaps, we shall know the intense triumph of being common."

Ens p. 116 "It is not easy to get used to doing without a doer; indeed, the very thought of it is unthinkable. Yet the body functions this way all the time. No one is telling the heart to beat or how their liver must function. So who is doing this, who is in charge here? We call this the 'wisdom of the body' which is a good example of doing without a doer."

Ens p. 125 "The only person I know who showed us this crossing by his personal example – and not by his words or descriptions – was the man who ended his life on the cross."

Ens p. 126 "did he give up his self so the rest of us would not have to do so? Or did he give up his self to show us the lengths to which we must go in order to see?"

Ens p. 126 "For now, I will only say: yes, I would recommend this journey; not mine, of course, but any man's journey that would allow him to see 'that' which lies beyond everything we can call 'self.'"

Ens p. 128 "Off and on during the journey, I wrote about Christ because I felt I was beginning to see him in a totally new light – beginning, perhaps, to see as he had seen."

Ens p. 129 "I have often thought of Christ as one who fell outside his Jewish frame of reference when he saw its truth and went about setting the record straight."

Ens p. 147 "Now I understood the real tragedy – his and my own. It was the tragedy of all those who had believed in him, but would never come this far and would never understand a thing like this."

Ens p. 147 “he did it not only for himself, but that others would not be afraid when their time came to stretch these same human limits.”

Ens p. 150 “The resurrection, then, is the Truth of Christ: the Truth that only the divine Christ (Logos) is eternally one with God, and not our personal individual selves. While this is truly the good news of Christ, for some people, at least, this seems to be too frightening to even consider.”

Ens p. 151 “With the dissolution of Christ’s human form – seemingly into air or a cloud – Christ suddenly becomes everywhere. No longer limited to a single form, Christ is the One Eternal Form from which all multiple forms arise and into which they ultimately dissolve.”

Ens p. 153 “If the truth be known, when self’s transformation into Christ is complete, it is only Christ who dies and Christ who rises.”

Ens p. 154 “I am convinced that one’s trust in God, the great Unknown, must be tried in fire, otherwise this fear remains and will never be overcome. The final relinquishing of self (the higher unitive self) may therefore constitute the only true act of faith in God man can make; while clinging to God, our union and experiences of Him, may be a great mistrust and the ultimate expression of disbelief.”

Ens p. 195 “Outside our choosing and doing, then, all is being moved by an unknowable intelligence, moved in one sure direction and hanging as it goes, wherein the immediate goal is nothing more than the movement itself.”

Ens p. 205 “as long as we are creatures we are not in the divine essence; it is only after we have been transformed into Christ that we become one with the divine essence, in which case, we are no longer ‘creatures’. In fact, in the end there is no ‘we.’”

Ens p. 207 “what flowed forth from God in the act of creation (or with creation) was some unknowable aspect of Himself. Thus if we were created from nothing it can only mean nothing knowable to the mind, which is the truth, since God’s essence is intellectually unknowable. Yet, the experiential understanding of how this works is possible once self has fallen away.”

Ens p. 211 “In new translation this saying turns into: ‘He who seeks only himself brings himself to ruin, whereas he who brings himself to naught for me discovers who he is.’ Mt. 10: 39. To this I would add that in coming to naught he will not only discover who he is, but ‘what’ he is, for in God these cannot be separated. That he is, what he is, who he is, where he is, in God these are all One, and outside this One, nothing is.”

From Essays on the Christian Contemplative Journey:

Ecc p. 12 “Our initial encounter with this Omnipresence is thus tied to the more formless element in nature -earth, sea and sky – rather than any particular form in nature – flower, rock or whatever. At times it may seem to be the mystery ‘in’ which all things exist; at other times, it seems to flow ‘through’ all that exists. Then again, Its prominence may be such that nature becomes but a backdrop for Its Presence. [This is what she means when she says, “If you really see God in nature, you are not going to see nature anymore!”] But these are subtle distinctions for which everyone will have their own report.”