

# A Call to Contemplative Action

October 20, 2020

## Scripture

Be still before the Lord, wait for God. (Psalm 37:7)

## Reflection

I believe that the combination of human action from a contemplative center is the greatest art form, one that takes our whole lives to master. When action and contemplation are united, we have beauty, symmetry, and transformation — lives and actions that heal the world by their very presence.

...The contemplative side of the soul will reveal itself when we begin to ask, "How can I listen for God and learn God's voice? How can I use my words and actions to expand and not to contract? How can I keep my heart, mind, and soul open, even 'in hell'?"

...True contemplation is really quite down to earth and practical... Contemplation builds on the hard bottom of reality—as it is—without ideology, denial, the contemporary mood, or fantasy.

The reason why the true contemplative-in-action is still somewhat rare is that most of us are experts in dualistic thinking. And then we try to use this limited thinking tool for prayer, problems, and relationships. It cannot get us very far. We cannot grow in the great art form of action and contemplation without a strong tolerance for ambiguity, an ability to allow, forgive, and contain a certain degree of anxiety, and a willingness to not know—and not even need to know. This is how we allow and encounter Mystery.

(Richard Rohr, [Dancing Standing Still: Healing the World from a Place of Prayer](#), Paulist Press: 2014.)

## Music

[World Peace Prayer](#) (Marty Haugen and Marc Anderson)

## Questions for Reflection and Dialogue

*Our faith and all that we desire for our world calls us to be contemplatives-in-action. What does that mean? What practices might help us to become true contemplative activists?*

*How might the practice of contemplative action inform our decisions in the 2020 election and our actions in the public square?*

## Closing Prayer

God of all, in this year of election, in these days of discernment, **IGNITE** us with the fire of your love. **ENFLAME** our hearts with courage to embrace dialogue that transforms and truth that frees. **KINDLE** our love with kindness to heal divisions and reconcile relationships. **LIGHT** our imaginations with insight to envision and create a world where all are one. **STIR** our actions with justice and peace to engage critical concerns and cherish all of life. **FIRE** our lives with audacity and hope to risk all for God's mission.

-- Roxanne Schares, SSND

