

Spirituality of the heart



Spirituality of the heart approaches life by seeking to experience and understand the movements of one's own heart with the heart of Jesus.

In the Spirituality of the Heart, right relationships with God, others and ourselves are key.

These relationships are explored by experiencing and understanding four movements in a relationship:

Encounter,

Intimacy,

Conversion

Mission.

I. Encounter

We encounter God

- in nature
- in people & events
- in movements of thought & feeling
- in words spoken & written
- in works of art

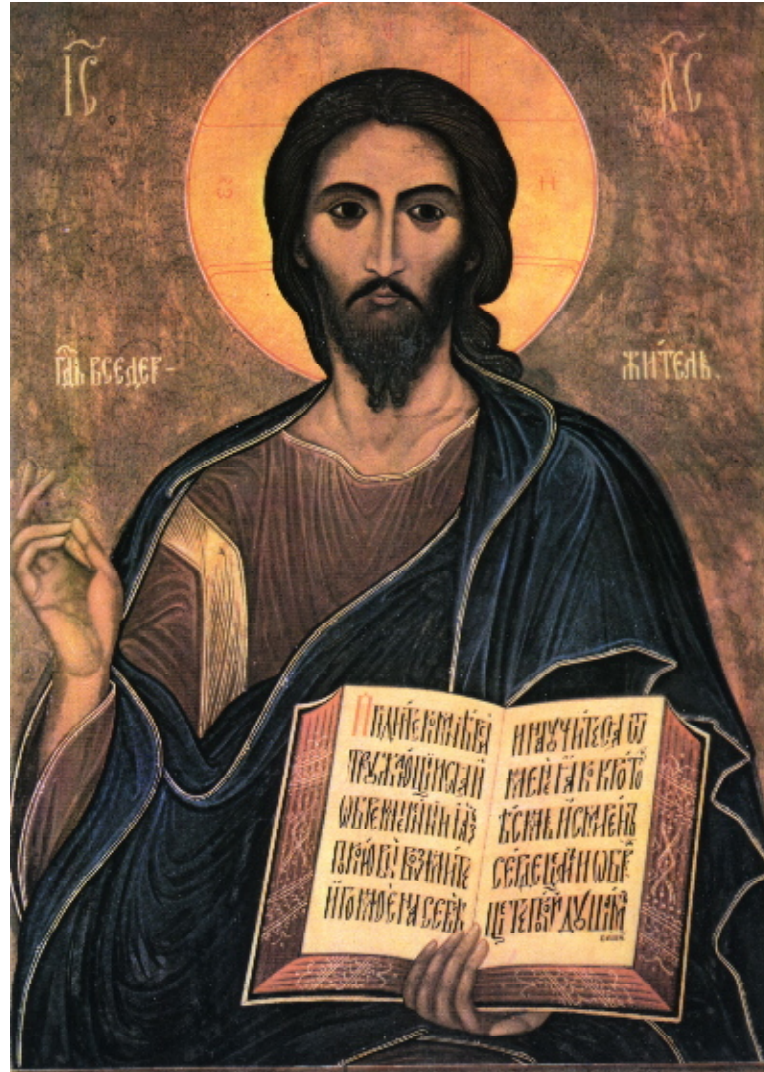
They reveal something of the truth, beauty & goodness of the transcendent & mysterious God

We encounter God

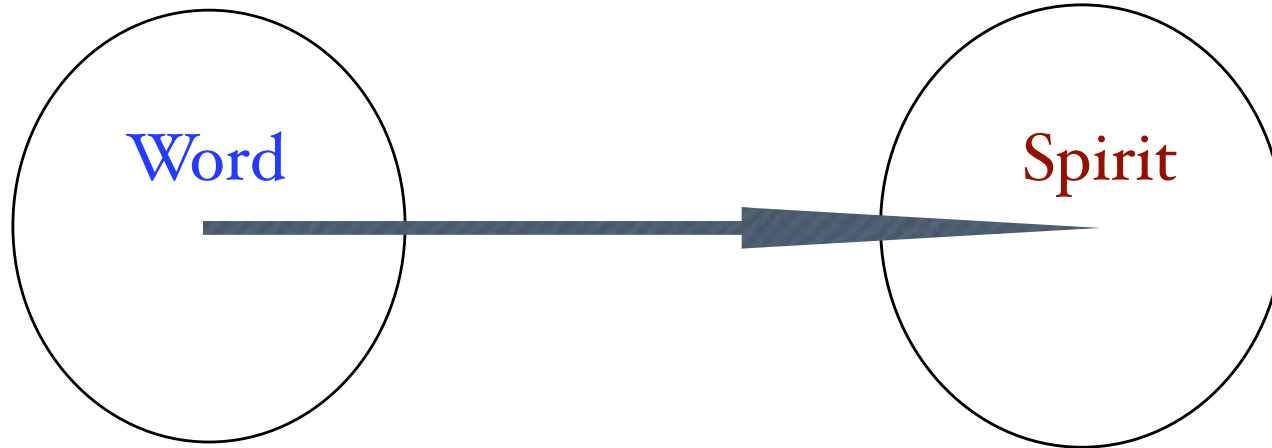
- in the Vedas & Upanishads
- in the sayings of Confucius
- in the sayings of Gautama the Buddha
- in the oracles of the Hebrew Scriptures
- in the Moslem Qur'an
- in the mystics, poets, artists of all cultures



We experience this intimacy by being in communion with Jesus



Encounter



Heart

speaks to

Heart

2. Intimacy

We long for a deeper, more intimate encounter with God: we long to experience God's love as personal, unconditional and faithful. If we are to find meaning and happiness on earth, the greatest human need is to learn to believe in God's love for us and to allow God's love to transform our lives. Human hearts hunger for unconditional love; everything and everyone else will eventually leave us unsatisfied.



‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us’(Romans 5:5)

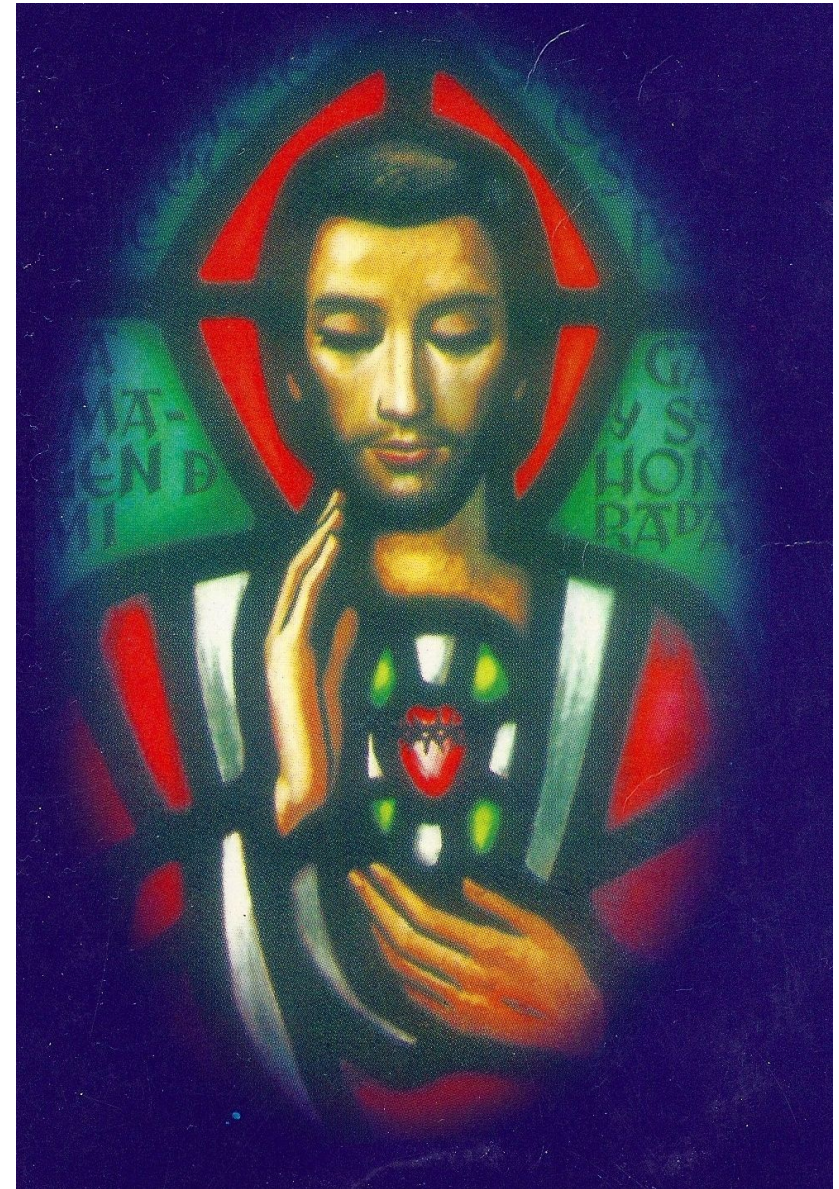
Heart

Living the spirituality of the heart is called following the way of the heart. This helps us experience the compassionate love of God as revealed in Jesus, symbolised by His pierced heart.



To accept God's love means to accept Jesus' invitation into a friendship with Him and with His Father. Jesus tells us, "I no longer call you servants . . . I call you friends. It was not you who chose me; no I chose you."(John 15:15-16).

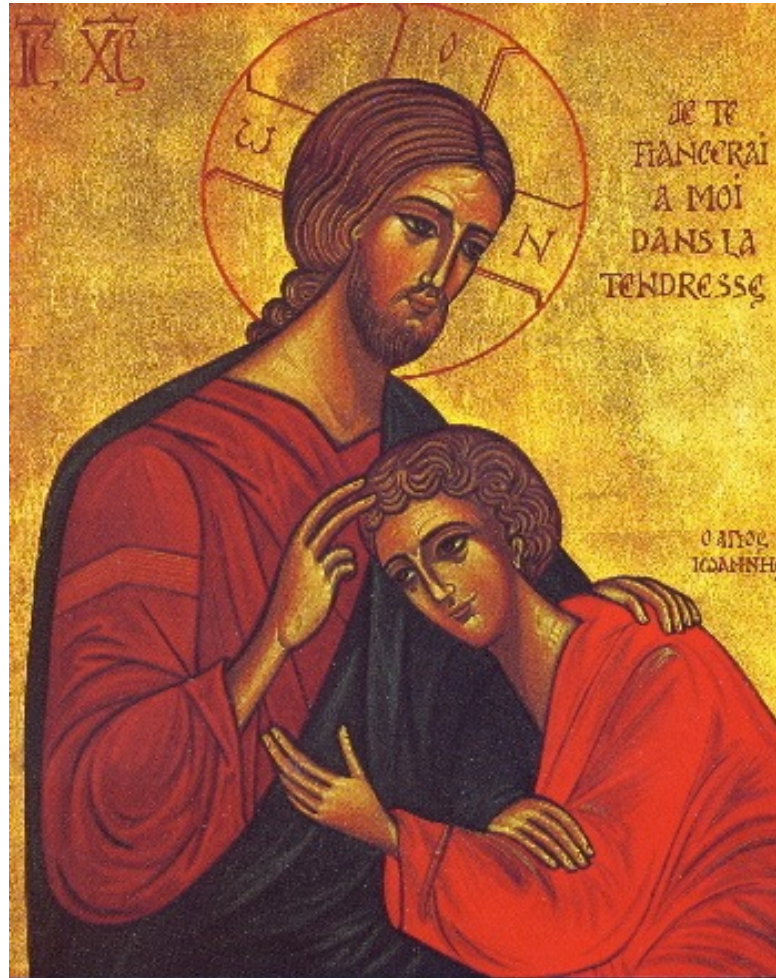
Jesus invites each and every one of us into friendship with himself. Jesus invites us to share in his communion with God, his Spirit, his prayer.



It is God who initiates communion. We call this communion 'prayer'.

Christian prayer is communion in the prayer of Jesus

God's perfect
human Word,
symbol of the
Divine Word
of the Self-giving
always
Transcendent
God



Communion in the
Love-Spirit that
unites Jesus and God,
symbol of the
Divine
Love-communion
of the always
Transcendent
God

3. Conversion



As we experience God's personal, unconditional and faithful love, we are moved to let go of whatever might block our relationship with God.

This letting go will help us grow in all of our relationships.

We are freed to allow God to change our hearts and minds.

Spiritual writers teach us that letting go, making space for God, is the most effective way to participate in one's spiritual growth.

Spirituality of the Heart

speaks of the necessity of turning away from anything that limits our capacity to love and be loved.

4. Mission

The fourth movement of a spirituality of the heart is a desire to share. It is a desire to be a new person in a new relationship and to allow this to affect all of our relationships. It is a desire to share with others the experience of intimacy and conversion, by words and actions, bringing us to the core and meaning of a relationship.





‘From the Heart of Jesus
pierced on Calvary, I see a
new world coming forth –
a great and life-giving
world, inspired by love and
mercy: a world which the
Church must perpetuate
on the whole earth.’

(Jules Chevalier.

The Sacred Heart 1900)

‘Jesus went up on the mountain,
and called to him those he desired;
and they came to him.
And he appointed twelve,
to be with him,
and to be sent out’(Mark 3:13-14)

‘Looking on him who was pierced,
we see the new Heart
that God has given us,
an inexhaustible source of life ...

We want to proclaim his love
to the world’(MSC Constitutions 9-10)

Teilhard de Chardin SJ (1881-1955)

‘The evolution of chastity’ 1934

‘Some day,
after harnessing space,
the winds,
the tides
and gravitation,

We shall harness for God
the energies of Love.

And then,
for the second time in the history of the world,
we shall have discovered fire.’

Jesus shows us God's compassion

In Mark 1:40-45 we read the story of a leper who approached Jesus and said, "If you want to, you can make me whole." Jesus was choked up with pain. From a groan deep within, he said, "Of course I want to." Jesus embraced him and he was made whole.

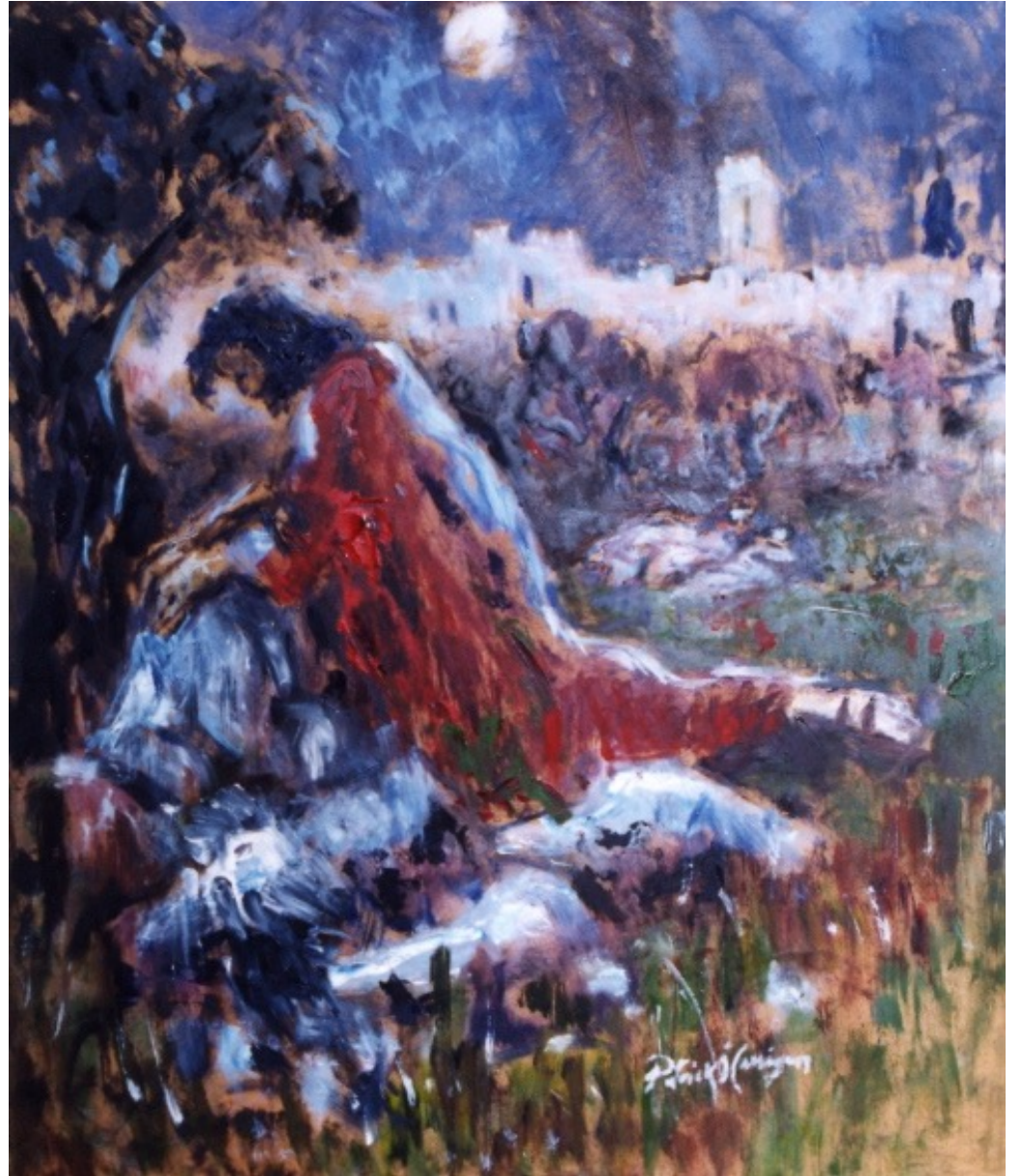
In Luke 7:11-14 we read the story of the widow from Nain. When the Lord saw her, His heart was moved with compassion. He walked over and touched the coffin and said, "Young man, arise!" Jesus gave him to his mother.

Jesus showed His compassion when he wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) and when he wept with Mary and Martha over the death of their brother (John 11:35).

Jesus identified himself with the loss and pain of the least of his brothers and sisters (see Matthew 25:31-40).

Jesus was tested in every way we are and He experienced the very depth of the human condition. He suffered and accepted death, even death on the cross. *'For it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weakness with us, but we have one who has been tested in every way that we are, though He did not sin'* (Hebrews 4:15).

The Gospels describe Jesus' profound struggle in Gethsemane



The Gospels recount Jesus' cry from the cross, 'My God, my God why have you abandoned me?'

Jesus profoundly understands our human struggle.





Heart speaks to Heart

I am with you