



# Reflections

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Greetings of Love and Light,

It has been a year and a half since I have sent out a newsletter and I was surprised when I realized that. Much water has gone over the dam and some things have changed, but the foundation remains. It reminds me of one of my favorite questions that I love to ask people: Is your glass half-full or half-empty? It depends on your perspective and that perspective changes everything.

A year ago this weekend my father passed away at the age of 104 and two weeks ago a close friend and priest of the Order of Mary Magdalene let go of her physical life. I miss them both but I also realize that death was a blessing for them. It is those of us who are left behind that face the challenges: the challenges of our everyday lives and the ultimate challenge of what waits for us after we die. My father chose to question the existence of an afterlife until the very end but he knows now. Many of us struggle with that question, particularly when a loved one passes. We want to believe that something of our humanness survives death, but are we deluding ourselves?

The key is to remember that we are much more than flesh, blood and bone. We are spiritual beings choosing to have a physically human experience. This is where my father got stuck and many of us do also. He was an engineer and spent his entire life focused on the physical, the rational, and the provable. When we do the same, we not only short-circuit our spiritual growth, but we slide into the black hole of fear. And fear and love cannot live in the same space. We get to choose. We get to choose our perspective and then create our lives from what we choose.

It's easier if we remember the lesson of the rainbow – it takes both sun and rain to create a rainbow and both are necessary. Too much of either one and growth stops. A balance between the two and we flourish under the promise and hope of the rainbow.

As we look at our lives and our world, we may see a great deal of rain, even a deluge. But the sun is always shining somewhere, so is your glass half-empty or half-full? The choice of perspective is up to you and it makes all the difference.

*Mother Maryesah*

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## Coming Soon

*The Sanctuary of the Magdalene presents "Diamonds Are Forever" November 8-9, 2014*

*A Retreat for Spiritual Transformation and Inner Awareness*

*Transformations Spirituality Center, Nazareth (Kalamazoo), Michigan*

*For more details, please click on the "Upcoming Events" button in the navigation bar.*



## *A Religion Of One's Own*

*“Our society does crazy things routinely because it has forgotten religion. It is trying to go it alone. It thumbs its nose at mystery and suffers the consequences. We need to be skilled at dealing with the mysteries of love, illness, work, intimacy, and death. It’s difficult to imagine, but if we could turn things around and become a wisdom culture instead of an information culture, we might have a chance.”* Thomas Moore from *A Religion Of One's Own*

Many of us have grown up with a certain set of religious beliefs and dogmas. Often they go unquestioned as we enter adulthood and we find ourselves carrying a belief system that we inherited and that may or may not feel comfortable with who we truly are. Before we reach the last moments of our physical life and discover that our faith doesn't work because it's built on shifting sands, we have the choice to revisit and revise those beliefs that no longer work for us. In essence, we have the opportunity to create “a religion of our own.”

I have been reading and appreciating the work of Thomas Moore for some 20 years. In the early 90s he wrote his classic *Care of the Soul* and has offered his readers many profound insights since then. His latest work, *A Religion of One's Own*, flows from the pen of a man now in his 70s and with a lifetime of wisdom and experience. Perhaps I appreciate his insights so much because I see my own spiritual journey reflected to some degree in his. This is a man who began his journey in a Cistercian monastery preparing for the priesthood. Yet today he is married, with children, and openly and unapologetically ecumenical in his spiritual life. He chose “the road less traveled” and now comfortably shuttles between the secular spirituality of Henry David Thoreau and Emily Dickinson with a healthy dose of Zen Buddhism and Sufi wisdom added to the mix. As a psychotherapist, he works with dream interpretation and reveals to his readers that he reads tarot and consults astrology. This is his unique blend of spirituality, and he offers to be a guide for us to find and create one of our own.

Though I prefer the term spirituality instead of religion, Moore uses the word “religion” in a very specific way. He guides us back to the original etymology of the word, the Latin *re-ligare*, which means to bind together, thus emphasizing the bonds that we choose in our lives: with our world and our family and friends. In essence, he asks the question “What are you bound to? What are you committed to?” The answers to these questions equal our religion and everyone has one, even if they choose to be an atheist or agnostic. We all believe in **something** and that **something** defines who we are and what our choices in life will be. The question then arises: Are these bonds of freedom or limitation?

Essentially Moore is a mystic and he encourages us to push the envelope of our secular, rational culture and explore religion in all its mystery. In this he reminds me a great deal of the pantheism of Matthew Fox. They both urge us to celebrate the divinity that surrounds us in nature and in ourselves. All things are “receptacles of divinity.” “You are what Nicholas of Cusa [an Early Church Father] called a *deus humanus* – a human-god or god-human. Paradoxically, without that divinity you have no humanity.”

Equally important in the process of creating a religion of one’s own is the power of intuition. According to Moore, “finding your own way toward a unique religious life isn’t like preparing for a profession. You don’t go to school for it, and you won’t find a ready-made plan. You have to follow inspiration, revelations, surprises, turnabouts, and intuitions. I don’t use the word ‘intuition’ lightly. I don’t mean a simple hunch. I’m referring to a deep kind of knowing that doesn’t follow the rules of logic and can’t be found through research and reasoning.”

Moore points out that the word “intuition” comes from the Latin word which means “to keep watch over.” In other words, intuitions are not always obvious. We need to stay alert and aware to make optimal use of this information that is available to us from other dimensions, other beings; the true “otherness” of our existence. We need to learn to reach beyond the rational logic of our physical existence and trust what we feel deep inside our sacred heart. As we trust in own inner guidance, we will be lead to a “religion of our own.”

As Moore reminds us, “The discovery or creation of a religion of your own is not an option. It’s a necessary step in your spiritual unfolding. Resist it and hide either in a religious institution or in a fully secular world, and your soul will be stuck...A religion of one’s own is a process, not a static state, with forward and backward movements. It is rarely a steady evolution. It is both painful and wearisome and full of uncertainty.”

The spiritual journey is full of pressure and doubt and wonder, but we do not walk it alone. And the rewards are priceless!

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## Save the Dates!

Our next Path of the Rose, which we offer each spring, will be earlier than usual, March 28-29, 2015. This scheduling will help us accommodate our second Mystery School which we are planning for August 6-9, 2015. Our theme will be Infinite Possibilities: Celebrating the 8-8-8 and we already have confirmation that one of our featured presenters will be Gillian MacBeth-Louthan who has been working with the 8-8-8 energies for a number of years. We’re delighted she can be with us and you may visit her website [www.thequantumawakening.com](http://www.thequantumawakening.com) to learn more. Stay tuned for updates. More exciting news to come.

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## ***You're Invited!***

Effective immediately, the Sanctuary of the Magdalene is now offering new opportunities to those who would like to support our events and our work. We are revising our membership structure to resemble the multi-levels offered by other non-profit organizations like PBS. We now offer five levels of annual membership as follows with each level receiving a membership certificate:

**White Rose - \$15.30** No change of our current

**Pink Rose - \$44.00** (Gift of key chain included)

**Yellow Rose - \$88.00** (Gift of mug included)

**Peach Rose - \$122.00** (Gift of autographed copy of "Light In the Darkness," a devotional book by Maryesah Karelou)

**Red Rose - \$153.00** (Choice of "Light In the Darkness" book or Sanctuary of the Magdalene journal plus automatic early bird discounts for all Sanctuary events)

Of course contributions of any amount will be greatly appreciated. You may use PayPal on our website to make your payment by credit card. In the next few months we will be focusing on securing our status with the IRS so that all contributions will be tax deductible at the federal level.

For those who know who we are and the energies that empower us, we encourage you to make a commitment to the union of the Sacred Masculine and the Sacred Feminine. For those who know very little about us, please visit our website at [www.magdalenerose.org](http://www.magdalenerose.org) or feel free to contact the Director at [maryesah@magdalenerose.org](mailto:maryesah@magdalenerose.org). The journey is just beginning!



### *In Memoriam*

*Paulette Borener Pancarz*

*December 6, 1949 - August 13, 2014*

It is with a great sense of sadness and loss, yet with a trust in Divine Order, that I share the news of the death of our sister and friend, Paulette Pancarz, after a long and painful battle with bone cancer. Paulette was a deeply committed member of the Sanctuary of the Magdalene and one week after a near-death experience in March, she was ordained to the priesthood in the Order of Mary Magdalene on March 19, 2014. She was a woman of great faith, strength and courage who had much to teach us. It is our hope and belief that she will become our teacher and guide from the inner planes as we continue to mourn the loss of her physical presence with us. Paulette, we love you. We bless you and we thank God that you graced us with your gifts. Rest in Peace and remember that well-behaved women rarely make history, so don't cause God and the angels too much trouble!

### ***Prayer Corner***

Your prayers are requested for Denise Thompson, Paulette Pancarz's daughter, who is currently battling cervical cancer. Are you or your friends or loved ones in need of prayer support? Let us know by emailing [maryesah@magdalenerose.org](mailto:maryesah@magdalenerose.org). The information will be shared across our network. You are never alone and there is no separation.

*Reaching For Rainbows by Ann Weems*



I keep reaching for rainbows...

Thinking one God's morning

I will wake up with rainbow ribbons in my hair,

With hurts painted over in hues that only angel wings could brush,

Black obliterated, chaos hurled beyond the rainbow and my vision,

The world created in a myriad of colors:

The hungry fed, the dying held, the maimed walking, the angry stroked,

The violent calmed, the oppressed freed, the oppressors changed,

And every tear wiped away.

I keep reaching for rainbows, but instead of colors in our storm,

Gray and black infiltrate, dirtying the sky,

And I hear human voices wailing in the darkness,

The never-ending darkness...

Just the same I know the promise of the rainbow.

I keep thinking I'll turn a corner one day

And find a litany of rainbows flung across the sky,

Hosannaing back and forth through all the ages and

Out into eternity forever amen!

Every tear wiped away -

It's a promise -

When we become rainbows to each other.