



the Mendicant

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Teaching and Me—Part 1

I never thought of myself as a teacher, although my mother told me that she suspected it early on. After I made my first cassettes in 1973 she told me that I used to gather my little neighborhood friends as early as 1950 (I was 7) in Topeka, Kansas, and had them all sit on a bench in our back yard on Summit Avenue. I would hold my penny catechism upside down since I could not read yet—and I would pretend to be teaching “about Jesus”! God, I must have been a weird little kid.

At the age of 14 I left home for the school years to study at the Franciscan seminaries in Cincinnati, Detroit, and Dayton. I was mostly a “B” student for my entire 13 years of study, feeling not so smart among the many brilliant guys. I never did that well in tests because I did not usually remember exactly what the professors had taught, but I gave them *my* thoughts on what they taught. I am surprised they passed me from one grade to the next.

I remember my surprise when a seminary professor asked me in 1967 if I would be willing to team-teach a course at nearby Wilmington College in Ohio entitled “Catholic-Quaker Dialogue” with the well-known T. Canby Jones. I was surely intimidated. No one was more completely taken aback than I when I realized that the students actually liked what I was saying, as did this fine Quaker professor. Soon they asked me to teach another course at famous Antioch College where young rebels in 1968 were interested in the Christian approach to questions of violence and non-violence. That also went well.

In 1969 I was ordained a deacon and spent much of that year in two places that deeply formed me: Acoma Pueblo here in New Mexico (where I fell in love with

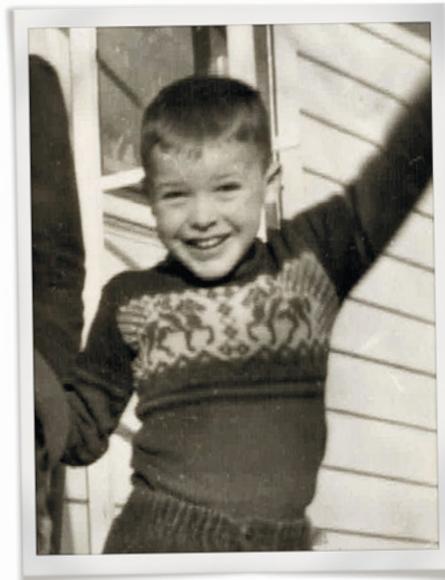
this culture) and Resurrection Parish, a poor black church on the north side of Dayton. At Resurrection Parish I was helping out an old, holy, diocesan priest, Fr. James Conlon, who later became a missionary in Grenada, because he loved the poor so much. In both places I spoke weekly, the subject determined every Sunday by the Gospel readings, and I fell in love with my newly studied Scriptures. They provided me with a regular platform to talk *on just about everything that mattered*, and, in both churches, to speak to non-establishment audiences who could know and listen “outside of the box.” What a gift to get me started!

I was ordained in 1970 and received thinking-on-my-feet training by teaching courses to sophomores at Roger Bacon High School in Cincinnati.

On the weekend of November 6-8, 1971, I gave my first young men’s retreat at St. Anthony Shrine on Colerain Avenue in Cincinnati, Ohio, to a group of 18-year-old seniors from Catholic high schools. They were all under duress. I preached on *The Prodigal Son* one

night, and they were “baptized in the Spirit” and began singing in tongues right in front of me (yup!)—and they never left the church the entire night. I left, however, because I clearly knew it had little to do with me. I knew nothing about “tongues” or charismatics or the Holy Spirit, but I learned quickly. I had no choice.

All my life, I have had little choice, but I will reveal more of that in Part II in the May 2014 *Mendicant*. Thank you for having confidence in what has taken me a long time to trust.



...I would pretend
to be teaching
“about Jesus”!

fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

The Center for Action and Contemplation announces the retirement of Alicia Johnson, Executive Director of CAC for the past three years, effective March 4, 2014. Alicia offers these words in farewell:

"What a marvelous three years it has been, serving the constituents of the Center for Action and Contemplation. It truly feels like everyone put on the harness together and realized an amazing multiplication of the work in every direction and by every means, for now and into the future. Together we welcomed nearly 100,000 new individuals and deepened the ways for all journeyers, brand new or well-known to CAC, to study, practice, struggle, and perhaps surrender over and over to the realization of who we are in God and to whom we belong. For me, that divinely-led relationship now calls me to retire from full time work and focus on specific interests I feel I can newly affect in the world. I only ask that everyone join me in giving thanks for CAC, the growth it has meant for all of us, and the continued blessing it will be."

Alicia brought incredible talent, vision, and energy to CAC so that we could share Fr. Richard's teaching with so many people. She leaves behind a wonderful legacy, including a dedicated, multi-faceted staff that will be CAC's foundation as we move forward. We wish Alicia Godspeed as she enters a new stage in her journey.

The CAC Board of Directors

Turning Information into Transformation

The question for us is always "how can we turn information into transformation?" How can we use the sacred texts, tradition, and experience to lead people into new places with God, with life, with themselves? — Richard Rohr, OFM

We seek to empower individuals to live out their sacred soul tasks in service to the world through:

- ◆ **Conspire Symposia:** Seven-year series of events following Fr. Richard's underlying themes
- ◆ **Webcasts:** Live teachings from Fr. Richard streamed online, around the world
- ◆ **Online Education:** Self-paced, online courses connecting learners worldwide
- ◆ **Bookstore:** A comprehensive selection of books and recordings (many available only at CAC)
- ◆ **Living School:** Two-year program, combining onsite and online learning
- ◆ **Daily Meditations:** Free daily studies sent by e-mail to over 100,000 individuals

Support the work of turning information into transformation!

The Center for Action and Contemplation is a non-profit educational organization. Please support this work by donating securely online at cac.org/support-cac or by sending a check, payable to CAC, to PO Box 12464, Albuquerque, NM 87195. Please also consider remembering CAC in your will.

To learn more about making a charitable contribution, including stock transfers and bequests, contact us by email: info@cac.org



Center for
Action and
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*An educational center grounded in the
Christian mystical tradition*

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- Visit us online at cac.org to learn more about CAC's educational programs and resources
- Sign up to receive monthly news and daily meditations by email: cac.org/sign-up
- Stop by our Visitor Center and Bookstore at 1823 Five Points Rd SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Write to us at info@cac.org or CAC, PO Box 12464, Albuquerque, NM 87195



Ripples in the World: CAC Multipliers

We are honored to share stories of friends who take teachings and turn them into palpable actions and blessings for others. These “multipliers” extend our reach much further than we could ever dream—both geographically and within the context of practical issues. Thanks to the many, in addition to those named here, who allow the ripples of love to cross the still surfaces of their souls and become waves of transformation.



Ruth Patterson

“All cognition is recognition” is a favorite phrase of Fr. Richard’s. I am profoundly grateful for the many things I have “known again” through my encounters, whether by reading, listening, or personally meeting both him and staff members of CAC. Great love and great suffering inextricably interlinked, unity as

diversity embraced by love, the challenge to “unlearn,” the wonder of God choosing us “now and now and now,” the invitation to awareness, the mystery of it not being “addition that makes one holy but subtraction,” and so much else have not just been theories or ideas to talk about. For me they have truly been food for the journey and wine for rejoicing. If one of the relevant words in the etymology of “education” is the Latin *educere*, to lead forth or out, I am in the process of being “led out,” and for this I am profoundly grateful.

I am a Presbyterian minister and Director of Restoration Ministries. I live in Northern Ireland. For many years throughout our conflict and now in a post-conflict situation, I have been involved in reconciliation and peace-making, convinced that these are heartbeats of the Gospel. People do not let go easily of ancient wrongs. In comparison with other anguished parts of the world, we have been given so much, yet hope still seems to be in short supply—the sort of unimaginable, outrageous hope that can only come through someone who has the humility, the wisdom, and the holy boldness of a prophet. For your prophetic witness and encouragement, Fr. Richard—thanks be to God!

Ruth Patterson’s pre-conference workshop on reconciliation, presented at CAC’s April 2013 event, Intimacy: The Divine Ambush, is coming soon to Franciscan Media’s video channel: ondemand.catholicupdate.org.



Damien Faughnan

Over ten years ago, while I was spiritually searching, someone suggested that I attend a Men’s Rites of Passage (MROP) event hosted by the Men as Learners and Elders (M.A.L.Es) program of the CAC. I traveled somewhat nervously to New Mexico and had a life-changing

experience, a “radical re-orientation” of my life, over a period of five short days. I began to understand that the life “map” I had been using could only take me so far on the spiritual journey—by design. Not that the old map was bad; it just didn’t cover enough territory.

Following that event I made a commitment to join the M.A.L.Es organization and take the MROP to other men. In the years since, the M.A.L.Es program has grown from its humble beginnings to a powerful and transformative community that reaches around the globe.

As the men’s work spread, a new “container” or organization was needed. Illuman was formed as a nonprofit legal entity and, at the end of 2012, the CAC transferred the M.A.L.Es intellectual property to Illuman, beginning a new stage of the men’s work journey.

Illuman now has ten chapters in the US and we hope to officially add several international chapters in 2014. In November Richard Rohr will join us as we host our first conference: “Digging Deeper: Becoming a Generative Man.” To learn more, please visit Illuman.org and consider joining us in this vitally important work.

Damien Faughnan, an executive coach and spiritual director based in Scottsdale, Arizona, is board President of Illuman.org and has been involved in working with men for over 10 years. Damien is also on CAC’s Board of Directors.

Meet Your Spiritual Teacher for the Next Part of Your Life



Ilia Delio Rob Bell, Richard Rohr—*together, and in person, and teaching, and celebrating with you for 3 days in New Mexico. It's true!*

We are thrilled to present three master teachers, all highly engaging speakers, at the CONSPIRE 2014 symposium (see page 6 for details)—teachers who create original content to deliver to you with a lively voice and authentic energy, giving their love of teaching anew just for you.

As much as we value and use all forms of effective teaching here at CAC, there is still a special place in our hearts for live, in-person teaching and live, in-person

audiences. Perhaps it is the incarnate mystery we behold when we witness gifts of this magnificence given to humans for the rest of us. Thank God.

If you are not familiar with the works of any one of these fine theologians, rush to cac.org to become acquainted with them. And then, along with us, imagine what they are going to do with this achingly beautiful theme (the second of Fr. Richard's seven underlying themes): *If God is Trinity and Jesus is the face of God, then it is a benevolent universe. God is not someone to be afraid of, but is the Ground of Being and on our side.*

We've Got a Friend in Franciscan Media: Sharing Gospel Teaching in New Ways

Franciscan Media's mission "is to spread the Gospel of our Lord Jesus in the spirits of Saints Francis, Clare and Anthony."

—Father Daniel Kroger, O.F.M., CEO, Franciscan Media

CAC is proud to say that Franciscan Media (formerly St. Anthony Messenger Press) is one of the publishers who represent Fr. Richard, and has done so for 43 years. Franciscan Media first captured Fr. Richard's words on audio cassette (and folks still call our bookstore asking for "tapes").

Now CAC and Franciscan Media work together with advanced technology to offer formats from e-books to video streaming. You can experience increased access to videos of Fr. Richard's teachings through Franciscan Media's "Richard Rohr on Demand" (rohr.franciscanmedia.org). This library of on-demand videos is particularly

helpful for group study. There are currently 23 video segments in the library, with more being added.

New and forthcoming Rohr titles from Franciscan Media include:

- *Silent Compassion: Finding God in Contemplation* (book, e-book, audio) and *Silent Compassion: Richard Rohr at the Festival of Faiths* (DVD), celebrating Fr. Richard's meeting with the Dalai Lama in May 2013 (to be released in the spring of 2014)
- *Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi* (scheduled for release in the summer of 2014; book, e-book, audio)

CAC is very humbled by, and grateful for, Franciscan Media's extended reach.

"I Donate Because . . ."

An interview with a donor

Last May, CAC reached out to our friends, asking for help building an online course based on Fr. Richard's book, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self*. Many donors, including Gary Goodenow, responded generously. We met our funding goal, and the first *Immortal Diamond* online course is now open for registration! We spoke with Gary about why this work matters to him and what motivated him to give.

Mendicant: Gary, tell us how you first came to know of Fr. Richard and where your spiritual journey has led.

Gary: I started listening to Fr. Richard's tapes when he was at New Jerusalem in Ohio. Since then I have read most of his work, and it has really changed my life. I realize that I'm a nobody who is broken and poor; but I can also forgive my own poverty and let light and dark coexist in me. With Fr. Richard's insight, I see the healing power of brokenness.

M: What drew you to support the online course, *Immortal Diamond*?

G: *Immortal Diamond* resurrects the authentic self that was always there but which was just never really absorbed. As with great poetry, it's like hearing my own thoughts



brought back to me with added clarity and beauty.

I practiced in a teaching hospital for most of my career, instructing residents in training. So I love new methods of teaching, like online education. I donate to the CAC because of the respect I have for your work and ministry. Thanks to CAC and Fr. Richard for giving me new eyes to see reality!

M: Thank you, Gary! Blessings as you continue to experience Divine Reality.

Gary Goodenow has retired after practicing medicine for 39 years, serving primarily the indigent. He now looks after his elderly mother and spends much time with his four adult children in Florida.

Staff Picks

"Fr. Richard's talks on Trinity, especially *The Shape of God*, have completely transformed my view of relationships, both human and divine. I am in awe of the Trinity's mutuality and endless creativity and even more amazed that we are invited to share in this dance." —Joelle Chase, Director of Messaging

"*Portrait of a Radical*, a video recording featuring Richard Rohr, Allen Dwight Callahan, and Huston Smith, strongly impacted me. In this creative production (rich with art, music, and excellent teachings), we come to understand Jesus and the movement he inspired in first-century Palestine." —Vanessa Guerin, Director of Communication Arts

"Rich with tangible, topical, and timely examples, *Discharging Your 'Loyal Soldier'* offers practical steps in our

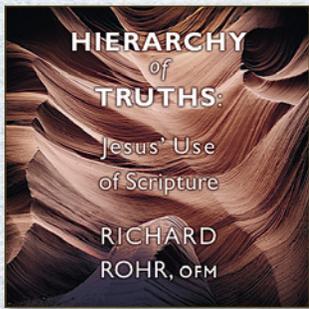
transition toward the second half of life." —Chris Spatz, Bookstore Manager

"I think about *Emotional Sobriety* on an almost-daily basis, usually right around the time my ego is about to throw a little temper tantrum." —Lisa Tannenbaum, Bookstore Team

WHAT FR. RICHARD IS READING

"I recently read Mary Oliver's latest books of poetry, *Dog Songs* and *A Thousand Mornings*. I have loved her compassionate and accessible poetry for years now, and used her "in-sight" on many retreats. Mary Oliver never disappoints me, but rather enchants my seeing and expands my heart."

COMING SOON:
NEW RESOURCES FROM CAC BOOKSTORE

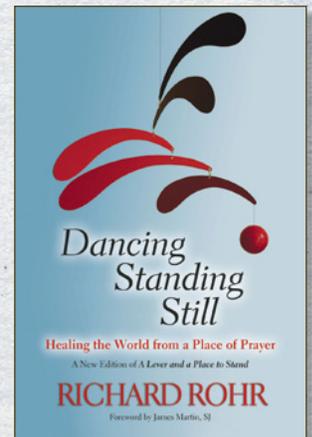


*Hierarchy of Truths:
Jesus' Use of Scripture*

Fr. Richard's teaching on how Jesus interpreted Scripture is now available as an audio recording (CD or MP3 download). His insights may change the way you read the Bible and can guide you in discerning the truest of true things, those that matter most.

*Dancing Standing Still:
Healing the World from a
Place of Prayer*

In this updated edition of *A Lever and A Place to Stand*, Fr. Richard offers a vision of living a generative and generous life from a prayerful stance. This is the greatest art form, he says: the dance of action and contemplation.



Order at store.cac.org

New Online Course

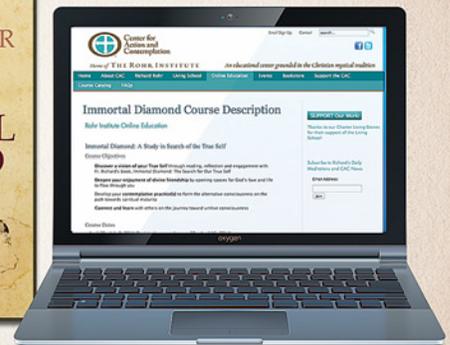
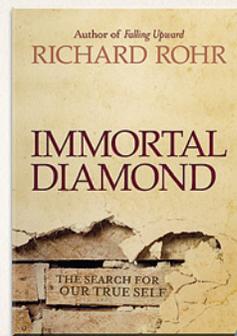
IMMORTAL
DIAMOND:

A Study in Search of the True Self

April 30—July 9, 2014

Learn what the crucifixion and resurrection really mean for your transformative journey.

Self-paced, 10-week, in-depth study of Fr. Richard's book, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self*

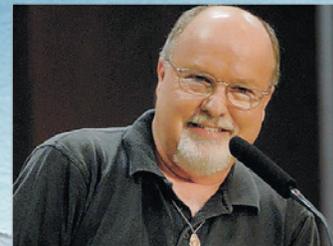


Learn more and register at cac.org

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

CONSPIRE 2014

August 31-September 2, 2014 • Hyatt Tamaya, Santa Ana Pueblo Lands, New Mexico



JOIN ILIA DELIO, ROB BELL, AND RICHARD ROHR IN PERSON!

*If God is Trinity and Jesus is the face of God, then it is a benevolent universe.
God is not someone to be afraid of, but is the Ground of Being and on our side.*

Space is limited! Register now at cac.org