

Blue Iris | Weekly Readings

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An excerpt from John Main OSB, “Commitment to Simplicity,” *MOMENT OF CHRIST* (New York: Continuum, 1998), pp. 26-27.

By meditation, we learn to be. Not to be any particular role or particular thing, but just to be. . . . in a state of utter simplicity. We are not trying to act. We are not trying to apologize for being who we are or as we are. We are, simply, living out of the depths of our own being, secure and affirmed in our own rootedness in reality. This is unfamiliar to most of us because we are trained to think that we find truth only amid complexity. Yet we all know at a deeper level that truth can only be found in utter simplicity, in openness.

Meditation is a way of breaking through from a world of illusion into the pure light of reality. The great illusion that most of us are caught in is that we are the center of the world and that everything and everyone revolves around us. But in meditation we learn that this is not true. [. . .] Meditation is the great way of liberation. We are liberated from the past and become open to our life in the present moment. We learn that we are because God is, [and that] simply being is our greatest gift.

After meditation: “Blue Iris,” Mary Oliver in *DEVOTIONS* (NY: Penguin, 2017), p. 215.

BLUE IRIS

Now that I'm free to be myself, who am I?
Can't fly, can't run, and see how slowly I walk.
Well, I think, I can read books.

"What's that you're doing?"
the green-headed fly shouts as it buzzes past.

I close the book.

Well, I can write down words, like these, softly.

"What's that you're doing?" whispers the wind, pausing
in a heap just outside the window.

Give me a little time, I say back to its staring, silver face.
It doesn't happen all of a sudden, you know.

"Doesn't it?" says the wind, and breaks open, releasing
distillation of blue iris.

And my heart panics not to be, as I long to be,
the empty, waiting, pure, speechless receptacle.

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