

**A Personal Practice of Reflection and Renewal  
for Individuals of All Faiths and Traditions  
During the Twelve Holy Nights of the Year  
December 25 til January 6**

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## ***The Eighth Holy Night - January 1***

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### *Gathering and Spreading*

Human Beings stand upright. No animal stands upright. Anatomically this uprightness is possible through the design of our pelvis, but it's purpose is to free our arms and our hands for certain creative gestures and deeds.

Spend a moment or two relating to your arms and your hands and their freedom. Think about how you use your arms and hands to create and to express yourself, not just to meet your survival needs. Feel the flow of directing and empowering energy coming from your heart into your gathering and spreading arms. Feel this energy right out to the tips of your fingers.

I smile as I contemplate tonight's polarity of Gathering and Spreading. The reason for the smile lies in heart force that lives in both poles. When I imagine gathering and spreading, I see my arms and my hands contracting into my heart and expanding out from my heart.

Your heart gathers and your heart spreads. Your physical heart gathers in from the body with venous blood and spreads out to the body with arterial blood. But our focus tonight is the gathering and spreading forces of your spiritual heart.

The spiritual heart gathers in the spiritual world to spread in the material world. But it also gathers in the material world to spread in the spiritual world. The first statement most of us will naturally understand. However, the idea that we gather in the material world for spreading in the spiritual world calls for thought. How does that occur?

The beings of the spiritual world, from the angels to the seraphim, have continuously poured their forces into earthly existence and human hearts. How do we return that gift? We return these gifts through meditation, prayer, silence and reflection. In all these acts we offer up to the spiritual world our forces of love. In addition, we bring to spiritual beings the perceptions of the temporal world that we gather with our senses. When we experience beauty, kindness, compassion and moral freedom we gather earthly goodness into our souls and we spread that goodness in the spiritual world. We do our gathering during our waking hours, and when we enter spiritual realities through the threshold of sleep, we begin to spread our earthly love among those beings that love us.

After we spread our earthly love, we are now empty and able to gather new spiritual gifts. And so when we awake in the morning filled with new spiritual gifts, we begin to spread this spiritual love out to the world through our thoughts, feelings and actions.

We gather love and we spread love. We must gather and spread wisely.

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## *Questions to Contemplate...*

How do you pay attention to what you gather and what you spread?

Do you attend to what you perceive with your senses? Can you go to bed tonight and gather all the temporal riches of tastes, smells, textures, sounds and sights you experienced during the day? Can you release all that lacks beauty before you fall into sleep?

Can you gather your centering, balancing, harmonizing capacities for your review of the day? Do you pray, meditate and recall the subtle moments and gestures of kindness and compassion that you found in your daily life?

Do you spend time reading poetry or literature or writing words of meaning? What about experiences of music, sculpture, dance and other arts?

In your world of work, do you think about what you gather and what you spread?

In your relationships, what do you pour into the hearts of those you interact with? What do they pour into you? And don't forget to remember the face of a passing stranger?

Tonight we begin a new year of gathering and spreading. May you be blessed by what you gather and bless with what you spread.

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