

# Incarnation

## **Incarnation: The Real Downward Mobility?**

*Scripture: Philippians 2:5-7*

*In your minds you must be the same as Jesus Christ: His state was divine yet He did not cling to His equality with God but emptied Himself... and became as we are..."*

What is it about the trend toward downward mobility that simultaneously attracts and challenges us? Perhaps what attracts us is the vision of the potential simplicity of a life lived without clutter, the actual real-life clutter of too many things? And perhaps the challenge is the invitation to let go of all that gets in the way of the simplicity that such a vision invites us to embrace?

But are there possibly even deeper movements of the Spirit at work in us when we encounter this concept? And might these movements be related to the countercultural message that moves our hearts whenever we read the invitation of Philippians 2:5-7: "In your minds you must be the same as Jesus Christ: His state was divine yet He did not cling to His equality with God but emptied Himself... and became as we are..."

Ah! There is the real major downward mobility challenge from the Spirit! We are called to develop the same mindset as Jesus, to empty ourselves of our own mindsets, and they are legion!! For most of us this self-emptying is indeed a call to





ongoing radical downward mobility: downward from our illusions of control; downward from our cherished self-images; downward from our inflated egos; downward from our assurance of the rightness of our thinking; downward from all that is not yet fully the mindset of Christ within us.

However, our downward mobility must be much more than just a fall into nothingness. It must be a fall into grace, into an ever greater focus on God, who alone is good, and everywhere! It must call us to recognize God within us, around us, below us and above us!

Richard Rohr was on target when he wrote: “The pure spiritual genius of Jesus is that he succeeds in offering us a fully descending worldview – which is ironically and surprisingly, even to us, the only real ascent” (*The Mendicant, Summer, 2018*).

### *Questions for Reflection*

What do you believe is the greatest challenge for you personally, and for us as a Congregation, as we strive to live with the mindset of Jesus Christ? Be as specific as possible!

Which aspect of the call to personal downward mobility do you believe is most necessary for your personal ongoing process of transformation, and for the ongoing Congregational process of transformation at this time?

How well do you accept Richard Rohr’s insight that a “fully descending worldview is the only real ascent”?