

Harriet Lindman:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Harriet Lindman:

Welcome to morning prayers. For all who are able, will you please rise and join in the responsive reading, Psalm 13. "How long, oh Lord, will You ignore me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?"

Congregation:

How long will I have cares on my mind? Grief in my heart all day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand?

Harriet Lindman:

Look at me. Answer me. Oh Lord, my God. Restore the luster to my eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death.

Congregation:

Lest my enemies say, "I have overcome him. My foes exalt my [inaudible 00:02:58]."

Harriet Lindman:

But I trust in Your faithfulness. My heart will exalt in Your deliverance.

Congregation:

I will sing to the Lord for he has been good to me.

Harriet Lindman:

You may be seated.

Choir:

(singing)

Tianyi Yuan:

All right. Good morning, friends.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Tianyi Yuan:

Thank you for letting me to be here. I planned to share this message with you two weeks ago during the Luna New Year, but I was too busy to meet friends, talk with family members, and working on my deplorable senior thesis. So I was late. You may call my talk an expired talk, but I hope the content of my

message or my prayer will not expire. About two weeks ago, I celebrated Luna New Year as a Chinese Roman Catholic. I proudly follow the Chinese tradition, but I give thanks to the Christian God's grace and ask God to bless my family, my friends, my ancestors and my motherland. To make a terrible joke is terrible. I'm culturally Chinese, but religiously Christian. Just the opposite to some of my friends or postmodern college friends who are culturally Christian, but religiously something else.

As a Christian with a Chinese mind, whenever the Christian Bible especially the Catholic study Bible puzzles me, I return to Chinese religious tradition and the literature to get some inspiration. Last night, I was puzzled again while reading [inaudible 00:07:42] demonology and a mystical prayer. So this morning, being informed by some of my Chinese cultural heritage, I would like to introduce a fascinating prayer of a Chinese popular religion called religion of non-action, [foreign language 00:07:59] in Chinese, which teaches me how to love my friends, my neighbors, my enemies, and even my God as a Christian. This is the prayer. "Behold, our home of real emptiness held to our unborn mother. Behold, our home of real emptiness held to our unborn mother." The prayer characterized an endearing image. The mother tenderly wishes the wondering children to return home. Essentially, the prayer says that a believer ought to think of her or his transcendental or empty human origin as if she or he misses her or his home. And think of the divine or unborn savior as if she or he misses her or his mother. Amazing.

The savior or the divinity in general is personified as the mother also recognizing one's original human nature or salvation in a Chinese sense is depicted as going home. For me, this Chinese image of seeing mother and going home, it's not unlike the Christian Biblical narrative of Jesus Christ, the good shepherd fetching the lost sheep. Meanwhile, Christ The Divine Logos or the incarnated speaker of the Infinite Christian Divinity also said, "I'm Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Many early Christian cosmologists, such as Origin of Alexandria, also understood Christ the Divine Logos as the cosmic source from whom human beings arrived, and to whom all human beings shall return at home. So theoretically, Christianity seems to also create a beautiful image of going home. Nevertheless, as a Chinese by culture, I was more instinctively moved by the Chinese image of the mother calling the wondering Children home. Indeed, as a Christian by religion, I have to confess to you in public that I metaphorize Christian divinity as a mother in my heart and this mother, like divinity call of us to the same home of love.

Of course, we have different backgrounds and ways of expressing our spirituality. Still, I humbly invite you to ponder with me and pray with me to our coming home and mother. Look at us, we are children of God. If we view the divinity who created all of us as our common mother, shouldn't we love each other more deeply as sisters and brothers? Thank you friends. So let me end with the prayer again. Behold, our home of real emptiness held to our unborn mother. Thank you.

Harriet Lindman:

Please rise, embody your spirit. Together, let us recite the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying, "Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is The kingdom, The power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. Let us sing the hymn, Morning Has Broken. Hymn number 40 in your Harvard Hymn Book.

Creator God, You are a mother, calling us home. Help us respond to Your call and return home to Your love. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.

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