



## Women Exploring Spirituality

A circle of women committed to their own and to each other's spiritual development and growth.

### Session One: The Universal Christ

#### Excerpt from the Introduction:

- What if Christ is a name *for the transcendent within* of every “thing” in the universe?
- What if Christ is a name for the immense spaciousness of all true Love?
- What if Christ refers to an infinite horizon that pulls us from within and pulls us forward too?
- What if Christ is *another name for everything*—in its fullness?

*What is your reaction to these questions? What is the implication if Fr. Richard has this right?*

#### Excerpt from Chapter One

[Jesus] says it is those who “do it right” that matter, not those who “say it right.” Yet verbal orthodoxy has been Christianity’s preoccupation, at times even allowing us to burn people at the stake for not “saying it right.” This is what happens when we focus solely on an exclusive Jesus, on having a “personal relationship” with him, and on what he can do to save you and me from some eternal, fiery torment. For the first two thousand years of Christianity, we framed our faith in terms of a problem and a threat. *Rohr, Richard. The Universal Christ (pp. 17-18).* .

*Where have you seen this emphasis on verbal orthodoxy in your lifetime?*



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### **Quotes from Video of Fr. Richard's Opening Remarks**

The only really absolute mysteries in Christianity are the self-communication of God in the depths of existence—which we call grace, and in history—which we call Christ.

—Fr. Karl Rahner, Jesuit priest and theologian, 1904–1984

I do not worship matter. I worship the God of matter, who became matter for my sake and deigned to inhabit matter, who worked out my salvation through matter. I will not cease from honoring that matter which works my salvation.

—St. John Damascene, 675–753

No despair of ours can alter the reality of things, nor stain the joy of the cosmic dance, which is always there. —Thomas Merton, 1915–1968

Rohr, Richard. *The Universal Christ* (p. vii). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Thursdays 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Prairie Lutheran Church 11000 Eden Prairie, MN Write [community@charisecc.org](mailto:community@charisecc.org) for more info

### **Excerpt from Chapter One (Paired Sharing)**

The Eastern church has a sacred word for this process, which we in the West call “incarnation” or “salvation.” They call it “divinization” (theosis). If that sounds provocative, know that they are only building on 2 Peter 1:4, where the author says, “**He has given us something very great and wonderful...you are able to share the divine nature!**” This is Christianity’s core good news and only transformative message.

*Rohr, Richard. The Universal Christ (p. 27). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*

### **For Session Two:**

As you read, engage the questions in the Study Guide you have been given. Consider journaling your answers. Make note of what inspires or confronts you!