

Hours of the Universe Discussion  
December 2, 2021  
Vespers - Pages 197 to 215

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

**What attracts your heart and mind from the readings?  
What do you wish Ilia had developed more clearly?**

### Interesting Quotes from and related to Vespers Chapter 30 - Radical Forgiveness – Lessons from Nature

*Prodigal Son - So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son."*

*But the father said to his slaves "Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found," Luke 15: 20-24*

Nonhuman nature has a built-in capacity to let go so as to flow into new life; perhaps we might say that it has an intrinsic forgiveness factor. Relationships can be damaged because things happen, but there is a real propensity for bonding and group coherence among many different types of biological species.

Forgiveness is a Big Bang attitude; instead of allowing pasts to absorb us in a black hole of unhappiness and inner turmoil, nature teaches us to let go. Often we want to hurt those who have hurt us by stripping the good within them. To forgive is to return the good that belongs to the other.

### Interesting Quotes from and related to Vespers Chapter 31 – Costly Love

*What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul*

*Wondrous Love Hymn*

We are spending the majority of our waking hours in front of a screen or tethered to a device, and we are losing contact with nature, not only with the world of trees and flowers but with the nature of being human. We are less tolerant of one another, more emotionally reactive, and increasingly unable to cope with the complexities of our age.

Christ crucified discloses the heart of God in the heart of the universe. The cross expresses the mystery of God's absolute love hidden in the finite frailty of the human person. The humility of the cross reflects the humility of God.

This type of love, costly love, cannot be found in virtual reality or managed online. It requires all that we have and all that we are. It requires our utmost attention, our hearts and our wills; this type of love requires total self gift. ... Where there is love and forgiveness, there is hope for a new reality

### Interesting Quotes from and related to Vespers Chapter 32 - Time to Become Ultrahuman

*Prayer is powerful. It can heal, prayer can give, and it can change lives., Pope Francis.*

In his (Teilhard) view, spiritualized energy is the most highly developed expression of human energy. Human energy in its spiritualized form has an organizing quality of cosmic significance. Human energy affects the structural development of the cosmos; it is the spearhead of consciousness.

The principle of Omega is the presence of something in nature that is wholly other than nature; it is distinct yet intrinsic, autonomous, and independent; it deeply influential to nature's propensity toward complexity and consciousness.

For Teilhard, this inner power, the power of God-Omega, is awakened through contemplation; it orients all time and space into a unified field of love by which the whole cosmos becomes more unified in love.

Instead of placing all our faith in science and technology to lead us into a better future, perhaps it is time to attend to the mystics, who tell us that mediation or contemplative prayer may be the most important sours of energy for human evolution.