Historia Divina.

(a new spiritual process)

on Self-Immolations

Jeff Hood

June 2, 2022

Seeker.

Introducing Historia Divina… I created Historia Divina to be a mystical revelation of the juxtaposition of history, Christ and self. Since Christ has existed throughout all of history, it makes sense that one would be able to find Christ in history. Thus, Historia Divina is the process of engaging Christ with the expectation that Christ will guide you to deeper historical

and spiritual truths. It is imperative to remember that this process guides you into the account rather than just simply reading the account. Since you are journeying with Christ, the process is just as much about learning more about Christ as it is learning about a historical account. The process concludes in deeper historical revelation of Christ…Historia Divina.

Historia Divina has six steps.

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

Read.

Pick a historical account that has spiritual significance. Then, slowly read through the account. Now, close your eyes and rest your mind. In the stillness, offer thanks for the creation of the account.

Meditate.

Keeping the mind clear, breathe slowly for a short period of time. Then, allow all that you remember from the account to slowly come flowing back. Sit for a while with whatever you retrieve. Ultimately, you will create a mental synopsis of the account.

Pray.

With the eyes still closed, acknowledge that Christ is present. In these moments, ask Christ to guide you. With expectation, thank Christ for preparing you for what's ahead.

Contemplate.

Listen. Hear what Christ is saying to you.

Engage the depths of what Christ is saying.

Vision.

Restore the mental synopsis you created in your mind. Feel it in your spirit. Let Christ lead you back through the details. Give your being fully to the journey. Pay close attention to all that is revealed. There is no detail that is insignificant. Remember.

Record.

Hold tight to all that you have seen. Create a new mental synopsis. Find a place to preserve it. Give thanks.

The larger text is an account of a spiritual journey I experienced using Historia Divina… one that took me through the self-immolations of…

Thích Quảng Đức

Alice Herz

Norman Morrison

Roger Allen LaPorte

Nhất Chi Mai

George Winne, Jr.

It is my hope that the revelations contained in this text will help guide/inspire you in your own interactions with Historia Divina.

May the liberation you experience through the historical revelation of Historia Divina equip you to change the world.

The Rev. Dr. Jeff Hood

Dean, The New Theology School

The Self-Immolation of Thích Quảng Đức

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thích Quảng Đức self-immolated on June 10, 1963. In a vision, Christ revealed to me the beauty of the flames. Though the vision is mine…it is also yours. In fact, I constructed this text for you to join me. As you proceed through this text, I invite you to stop to breathe prayers as you finish the thoughts on every page. Just as I did. The beauty will find you. Just as it did me.

I don't recall where I was. I only recall where I went.

Deep in prayer, I met the risen Christ. “Follow me!” I couldn’t speak. I started to move. I didn’t know where I was going. I just knew that I was moving. Sometimes, thus is the nature of following Christ.

“Open your eyes.” I hadn’t realized that they were closed. In front of me, I saw a group of Buddhist monks deep in meditation. Looking around, I realized that we were high up in the mountains. I had never seen such a place before. Before I realized what was going on, I saw Christ join the monks in meditation.

“Join us.”

So, I sat down. Slowly, everything went up in smoke.

“Breathe.”

Before I was able to draw my next breath, I was alone with Christ and a Buddhist monk.

“Listen.”

Slowly, we came to know each other.

“Follow us.”

The higher we traveled the more I was able to see. Time and space seemed to stop.

“Look.”

In the distance, I could see an ancient people being marginalized and oppressed. I didn’t

want to keep looking. It was all too painful.

Then, I was there amongst the people.

“Feel.”

Christ and the monk led the way.

Colonialism had touched the entire world.

Vietnam was no different. The French staked their claim and ruled with an iron fist.

In the initial years of colonization, French authorities instituted a wide variety of discriminatory practices. Buddhism was pushed to the fringes. Catholicism was used as a means of correction and control. If you wanted to be involved in society, you were forced to

convert. If you didn't convert, you didn't matter. Such was the way that the French ruled Vietnam for decades.

Christ and the monk focused my eyes.

"There."

Children screamed. People ran. Fire shot into the sky. Everything was gone. Then, the French built a plantation…with a Catholic chapel at the center.

"There."

Bodies littered the ditches. Families were destroyed. Entire villages were decimated.

Then, the French held ceremonies to celebrate

their new railways…which were always blessed by Catholic priests.

“There.”

People were being removed from their homes to work. Protestors were massacred at a demonstration. Buddhist monks were being arrested…and tortured. Dissent was squashed. Corporations were set up to take all that they could from the people. In the churches… Catholics enjoyed the riches of their exploitations.

Christ turned away.

“None of this was of God.”

Together, we wept. In spite of the pain, Christ and the monk pulled me forward. I didn't want to go. I'd already seen too much.

"There."

In the distance, I saw a group of Catholic and Buddhist monks praying together. The gathered were desperate to see an end to the oppression. I sensed God in their midst. Before I had too much time to ponder the beauty of what I was witnessing, I saw local authorities busting up the group. Only this time, the authorities were not just French. The group was a mixture of French and Vietnamese. I realized that the

French had now cultivated an elite to exercise power over the people.

“There.”

I saw war. The world was at war. Bodies littered fields. Towns were destroyed. Pain was everywhere. Only this time, the destruction was in France. Catholic priests ministered to the people and wept at the destruction. I didn’t understand. I thought the narrative was just about the pain of Vietnam. Then I realized, pain was everywhere.

Christ and the monk took me back to Vietnam.

“Careful.”

From a great height, I watched as a charismatic figure jubilantly declared the foundation of the independent Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Hundreds of thousands of people cheered. The cheering was not to last. The French responded with brute force. War exploded.

“Careful.”

Nations rushed to take sides. Everyone watched the destruction they were funding from a safe distance. The people of Vietnam were left to suffer.

For a considerable amount of time, I stood in silence. I didn’t know what to do with all that

I'd seen. The pain seemed endless. Christ and the monk offered no words to console me. They stood with their own pain. Ultimately, we stood together.

"Look."

I rejoiced when a ceasefire was reached. I thought it was over. I was wrong. The pain continued. Vietnam was divided into two countries. Communist leader Ho Chi Minh led North Vietnam. Catholic leader Ngo Dinh Diem led South Vietnam. While Minh concentrated on uniting the country by force (through various forms of guerilla warfare), Diem

continued the oppressive policies of the French.

Nobody was safe.

“Look.”

Diem was a madman. South Vietnamese soldiers executed dissident after dissident. Blood flowed in the streets. Though no one was safe, Buddhist monks were particularly targeted. The monk began to cry as we watched the oppression continue. There seemed to be no end to the cruelty. Catholics were determined to silence their fellow citizens at all costs.

Christ turned away.

“Look.”

Strangely, I found myself in an office. Then, I realized that I was in one of the most famous offices in all the world…the Oval Office. I looked to the desk. There sat an older man on the phone. I listened to him as he pledged more and more financial and military support to the South Vietnam. With the United States on one side and the Soviet Union on the other, I knew that war would be endless.

Realizing that I was turning blue, Christ and the monk encouraged me to take a breath. Form the looks on their faces, I knew there was more. I begged them to let me go. They refused to

release me. There was still more to see. This was my cross to carry.

“Hear.”

Buddhists begged Diem to stop. Such begging only seemed to make things worse. Diem was determined to be just as oppressive as the French had been…if not more so. Political offices were granted only to Catholics. Foreign aid was distributed only to Catholics. Land was allocated only to Catholics. Diem was determined to make sure that Buddhists got nothing.

“Hear.”

The screams grew louder and louder. I couldn't figure out where they were coming from. We were in a church. Where could screams be coming from in a church. Then, Christ and the monk pointed to the village. There, we saw Catholic priests that had organized their own militias looting and destroying Buddhist places of worship. Buddhist monks were beaten senselessly. I was so ashamed.

"Hear."

In the distance, I could hear Buddhists begging to worship. Nobody listened. Prayer and meditation slowly became a crime. Services

were raided. Practitioners were thrown in jail. Eventually, prayer and meditation were seen as criminal practices. To add insult to injury, Diem even forced a variety of locations to fly the flag of the Vatican and dedicated the country to the Virgin Mary.

I witnessed. I heard. I grew angry. I demanded that Christ and the monk do something. It wasn't time yet.

I didn't want to open my eyes anymore…but I knew I didn't have a choice. There was still more to come.

"Weep."

In the midst of constant oppression, the people grew excited about the coming birthday of the Guatama Buddha. Fearful of such emotions, the government ordered that no Buddhist flags be flown to mark the occasion. Protestors marched on defiance. Gunshots pierced the air. Buddhist bodies bled out in the middle of the street.

There were no apologies. In fact, it was as if Diem was pleased that the massacre had happened. The government grew more murderous. The terror continued. Love seemed lost.

“Weep.”

Buddhists took to the streets. The violence continued. Catholics declared that those who loved Christ would rid the country of this problem.

“Weep.”

The mood changed. Christ bowed in deep reverence as the monk joined the protest against his people. I tried to follow. Christ held me back.

“Your time has not yet come.”

Hundreds of monks and nuns followed a small blue sedan carrying the monk. Solemnly, he looked at Christ and I as he drove by. We raced

to the next intersection. There the sedan stopped. Monks and nuns encircled the car. Christ pushed me toward the front. I knew that whatever was about to happen was important. The monk exited the car. I heard his name repeatedly being uttered by the gathered. Even though he had been with me the whole time, I felt like this moment was different. I couldn't take my eyes off him. Reverently, two monks sat down a cushion. The monk sat down. Over his head, the young monks poured multiple gallons of gasoline. The monk sat still and

prayed with beads. Then, he quickly struck a match and dropped it into his lap.

“Greater love has no one than this…”

Flames shot into the sky. Bewilderment struck us all.

To make sure that nobody missed his message, the monk declared in a final written statement…

“Before closing my eyes and moving towards the great vision of the Buddha, I respectfully plead to President Diem to take a mind of compassion towards the people of this nation and implement religious equality…”

The fire burned.

“Go and do likewise…”

When I looked up, I saw the monk amidst the flames. I knew that he saw me. I knew that he was calling for us. I knew where I needed to go. Christ and I joined him in the flames. We were now one. We were love. We were eternal. We were God.

Everything changed in an instant. Justice was so much closer now. The flames had touched the world.

“Well done my good and faithful servant…”

On the back of those very flames, we rose into the highest heavens. As we stood together, I

heard the words of commendation echo repeatedly in the highest heavens. There was peace. Looking around, I was unsure of how all of this had worked out. Then, from deep within, the Buddha assured me that there were many paths to get to this place. God was in us all. God was. God is. God.

Just as quickly as it all had happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where I was before it all began.

Then again, I don’t recall where I was. I only recall where I went…and there was no denying the truth that remained...

“God Is in the flames.”

The Self-Immolation of

Alice Herz

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

On March 16, 1965 in Detroit, 82-year-old Quaker peace activist Alice Herz self-immolated. In a vision, Christ revealed to me the beauty of the flames. Though the vision is mine...it is also yours. In fact, I constructed this text for you to join me. As you proceed through this text,

I invite you to stop to

breathe prayers as you

finish the thoughts on

every page. Just as I did.

The beauty will find you.

Just as it did me.

I don't recall where I was.

I only recall where I went.

Deep in prayer, I met the

risen Christ. “Follow me!”

I couldn't speak. I started

to move. I didn't know

where I was going. I just

knew that I was moving.

Sometimes thus is the

nature of following Christ.

“Look up.”

I didn’t realize I was

looking down.

In the distance, I could see

a woman and her child

fleeing terrible

oppression. I was

desperate to help. The

woman held out her hand.

I grabbed it to pull her to

safety toward me. Then, I realized that she was pulling me towards her.

“Hold on.”

For years…or perhaps just a few seconds…the woman pulled us through her life. She demanded that we see her plight. She demanded that we see how hard it was for her to find a safe place for her and her

child. She demanded that

we see.

“Stop.”

I’d never seen such

horror. People were living

on top of each other.

Nobody had enough to eat.

Nobody had enough

clothes. Nobody had

enough of anything. The

woman was desperate for

more. Somehow, she

stood up. Christ joined her.

“Watch this.”

Through her tears, she looked for an opportunity. Then, she found a way to escape. With all of the strength she could muster, she grabbed her daughter and fled…or maybe it was her daughter who grabbed her.

“Look”

Before I had time to

realize that we'd left, I was

surrounded by large

buildings. Smoke blasted

out of factories. People

were running from

building to building. Cars

were constantly blowing

their horns in the streets.

The world was spinning so

fast. I felt so insignificant.

Then, I saw her in the

distance. Christ drew me

closer.

“See.”

I watched the woman. In

fact, I couldn’t take my

eyes off her. I leaned in

further. I saw her write

letter after letter

demanding peace. I

watched her plan action

after action demanding

peace. I heard her make

statement after statement

demanding peace. I saw

her give all that she had

demanding peace.

Nothing seemed to change.

She knew it too. She didn't

know what else to do.

"Listen."

The groanings of her heart

rose to the heavens.

"Peace!"

Christ heard them all.

"Now."

Then, I watched Christ

take her hand. It was as if

they fully became one. I

didn’t know where they

were going. I just knew

that when they reached

out to me…I was terrified

to go.

“Come on.”

“What else can I do?”

“I’ve mailed countless

letters.”

“I’ve written countless

articles.”

“I’ve marched countless

steps.”

“I’ve spoken countless

words.”

“I’ve protested countless

times.”

“What else can I do?”

“I am here.”

“This is my path.”

“I won’t look back.”

With fierce determination,

I watched her pick up the

container. We traveled so

fast that I don’t even

remember traveling.

When I looked up, there

she was. She was ready.

The contents of the

container were dripping

down her face.

“Listen.”

I could hear her words.

“Quit wiping out whole

nations of your choosing.”

“No more war.”

“Quit spending billions on

arms.”

“End the military

industrial complex.”

“Stop the oppression.”

“Make this a habitable

world for all human

beings.”

“Get out of Vietnam.”

“Now is the time for

dignity and peace.”

“Feel.”

Then, the flames shot to

the sky. As she burned,

we joined her. In her

flaming body, we met all

who had gone before.

Those who had justly

chosen to give their bodies

to the flames.

“Hurry.”

Before I knew it, the

flames were out. The

mortal body of the woman

laid on the concrete

somewhere between life

and death. Her clothes

were still smoldering.

“Was it you?”

“Why?”

She lingered for a time. In

fact, she lingered just long

enough. We stood by her

bedside. Christ…even

Buddha…held her hand.

Then, it was time for her

to come home.

“Watch.”

In the distance, I watched

as she joined the great

saints in the sky. Light

perpetual shone through

her.

“Listen.”

Perhaps more loudly than

ever, I heard her final

words…

“GOD IS NOT MOCKED. To make myself heard I have chosen the flaming death of the Buddhists on the Wayne State University Campus of Detroit. May America’s Youth take the lead toward LIFE!”

-Alice Herz

Just as quickly as it all had

happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where

I was before it all began.

Then again, I don’t recall

where I was. I only recall

where I went…and there

was no denying the truth

that remained...

“God Is in the flames.”

The Self-Immolation of

Norman Morrison

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

Baltimore Quaker Norman Morrison self-immolated on November 2, 1965. In a vision, Christ revealed to me the beauty of the flames. Though the vision is mine…it is also yours. In fact, I constructed this text for you to join me. As you proceed through this text, I invite you to stop to breathe prayers as you finish the thoughts on

every page. Just as I did.

The beauty will find you.

Just as it did me.

I don’t recall where I was.

I only recall where I went.

Deep in prayer, I met the

risen Christ. “Follow me!”

I couldn’t speak. I started

to move. I didn’t know

where I was going. I just

knew that I was moving.

Sometimes, thus is the

nature of following Christ.

“Look within.”

I hadn’t realized I was

looking without.

“There.”

In the distance, I saw a

man meditating with his

baby daughter.

They were waiting to hear

something.

Christ pointed a celestial

finger in their direction.

“Go…become one with

them.”

I approached them with
deep reverence. Without
saying a word, the man
assured me that I was
welcome in the circle. So,
I sat…I closed my eyes…
and I listened.
I don't know how long I
was there. Time seemed
to stop. I kept leaning in
with deeper and deeper
anticipation. I got lost in a
suspended state of

consciousness somewhere

along the way.

Then…out of nowhere…

bombs started to explode.

The man and his baby

daughter stood with me

amidst the horror.

Everyone was on fire.

We all cried.

The bombs got closer and

closer.

I couldn’t run. I was so

scared that my body

wouldn’t work. I was at

the mercy of the

munitions.

I cried out for help.

Then…I saw death coming

straight for me.

The bomb exploded from

within.

I’d never felt such pain. I

was in a million pieces. I

couldn’t seem to gather

myself together.

I was deader than dead.

“Can life come from such a

lethal space?”

I had no idea. The only

thing I knew to do was to

sit in the pain….and wait.

Somewhere between time

and timelessness, the

pieces of me started

coming back together. I

watched the man and his

daughter gather every

single one. Somehow, I

was alive once more…but

still dead from all that I

had seen.

“Close your eyes!”

I could still hear the

screams. I wanted them to

stop…but I didn’t know

how. Just when I was

about to explode…silence.

“Look.”

In the distance, I could see

a man sitting at a desk. I

could tell that he was in

deep anguish…but also

deeply determined.

The bombs…the shrieks of

horror…the scenes of

death…they all played out

again and again right

above his head. I could

see everything in his

mind. Every word he

wrote seemed to be

accentuated by their

blood.

“Look closer.”

Though there were scenes

of horror in his head, love

flowed out of his

fingertips. He was writing

a love letter…to his

family…but also a

proclamation for all of

humanity.

Then, I realized it was

written to me as well.

I began to read.

Every word made it

painfully clear what was

coming. There was a heaviness beyond explanation. Vietnam was only a piece of the coming passion. This man was giving his life so that there might be life beyond life.

In that moment, the very presence of Christ entered his body.

There was no turning back.

There was only now.

“Stop.”

I couldn’t breathe.

I think I passed out.

I think…I…don’t know.

“Go.”

Oxygen flooded my

nostrils.

I heard a baby breath.

I heard a dad breath.

I was trying to breath

some words…something…

anything…but nothing

came out.

I watched the world fly by

my window.

I could feel the totality of

pain.

I could do nothing but

watch.

“This is how I felt.”

“This is how I feel.”

“This is what the passion

is.”

Before I had time to catch

my soul, the car stopped.

We all got out. The

journey was over. Then

again, the journey was just

beginning.

“Keep up.”

I was scared to follow too

closely.

“I’ve got to pour it on my

head.”

I knew what was coming.

The passion always seems

to end the same.

“Look up!”

I could see a figure

watching from on high.

“Hold the girl!”

I did as I was told.

What else was I supposed

to do?

“Be with me.”

All of me was there with

all of him.

Deep within our souls, we

burned for justice

together.

“Feel salvation.”

Then, I saw light.

Then, I saw a greater light.

Then, I saw light shoot

from his entire body.

“Hold the space in the

light.”

Then, the light

transformed us all.

I closed my eyes. I knew I

was going somewhere. I

just didn’t know where.

I stopped.

“Open.”

I was in the exact same

place that I was before.

Only this time, I was alone.

In deep anguish, I cried

out to God.

“Why has though forsaken

me?”

Then, peace washed over

me.

From deep within, I heard

a voice…

Then, I realized it was a

symphony of voices…

“Arise, let us be on our

way…”

“…let us take this light to

the world.”

God was us…

…and we were God.

The light was us…

…and we were the light.

Just as quickly as it all had

happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where

I was before it all began.

Then again, I don’t recall

where I was. I only recall

where I went…and there

was no denying the truth

that remained...

“God Is in the flames.”

The Self-Immolation of

Roger Allen LaPorte

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

Catholic Worker Roger Allen LaPorte self-immolated in front of the United Nations building in New York City on November 9, 1965. In a vision, Christ revealed to me the beauty of the flames. Though the vision is mine...it is also yours. In fact, I constructed this text for you to join me. As you

proceed through this text,

I invite you to stop to

breathe prayers as you

finish the thoughts on

every page. Just as I did.

The beauty will find you.

Just as it did me.

I don't recall where I was.

I only recall where I went.

Deep in prayer, I met the

risen Christ. “Follow me!”

I couldn't speak. I started

to move. I didn't know

where I was going. I just

knew that I was moving.

Sometimes thus is the

nature of following Christ.

“There.”

In the corner, I saw a man

deep in study.

Every word he thought

was a prayer.

Every word he read was a

prayer.

Every word he spoke was

a prayer.

There was no one else.

He was alone.

I reached out to him…

He couldn’t see me.

I couldn’t take my eyes off

him.

He wanted so much more

than solitude.

Christ grabbed his hand.

“Let’s go.”

I joined them on the

journey.

I didn’t know where we

were going.

The man was learning to

pray with his feet.

I was too.

“Close your eyes.”

“There.”

The house was full of all

types of people.

The world was changing.

Ideas bounced off every

wall.

I was just amazed to be in

the same room.

It seemed as if Christ was

too.

Hope sprang eternal.

Then, the war came up.

Images of burning

children.

Images of ransacked

villages.

Images that the mind

could not shake.

I watched the man grow

more and more convicted.

Would could he do?

Then, he saw the burning

monk in Vietnam.

He knew exactly what he

needed to do.

He knew the world

wouldn’t understand.

“These are my people.”

The man joined a huge

crowd.

Everyone was chanting

slogans against the war…

against war.

I could see the fire

burning within him.

I could see his

desperation.

“Now.”

The man walked up the

steps.

We joined him.

The man lifted the gas can

above his head.

We did too.

The man struck a match.

We did too.

The fire burned with great

intensity.

We were ready to go.

Then, the fire went out.

The man was still alive.

We were still alive

“Speak.”

“I am against war.”

The man was rushed to

the hospital.

We laid with him the

entire time.

The pain was immense.

Yet, the suffering of the

innocent was ever

present…

“Forgive them for they

know not what they do.”

Death was near.

We laid there together.

The room grew colder and

colder.

We could hear singing in

the hallway.

“This little light of mine.”

We ascended from the

hospital together.

The singing took us higher

and higher.

Down below, Christ left a

light.

The light of the man still

burns.

The fire will never die.

Then I heard a most

glorious response from the

lips of a saint…

"It is not only that many

youths and students

throughout the country

are deeply sensitive to the

sufferings of the world.

They have a keen sense

that they must be

responsible and make a

profession of their faith

that things do not have to

go on as they always have

—that men are capable of

laying down their lives for

others, taking a stand,

even when the all-

encroaching State and

indeed all the world are

against them."

-Catholic Worker founder

Dorothy Day in response

to the self-immolation of

Roger Allen LaPorte

Then, I heard Christ's

command.

"Burn my child…burn."

Just as quickly as it all had

happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where

I was before it all began.

Then again, I don't recall

where I was. I only recall

where I went…and there

was no denying the truth

that remained...

"God Is in the flames."

The Self-Immolation of

Nhất Chi Mai

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

Vietnamese Buddhist Nun
Nhất Chi Mai self-
immolated in front of the
Tu Nghiem Pagoda in
Saigon, Vietnam. In a
vision, Christ revealed to
me the beauty of the
flames. Though the vision
is mine...it is also yours. In
fact, I constructed this text
for you to join me. As you

proceed through this text,

I invite you to stop to

breathe prayers as you

finish the thoughts on

every page. Just as I did.

The beauty will find you.

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risen Christ. “Follow me!”

I couldn't speak. I started

to move. I didn't know

where I was going. I just

knew that I was moving.

Sometimes thus is the

nature of following Christ.

“There.”

I saw a woman in an

orphanage.

“There.”

The students crowded

around her.

I could see that she was

loved…perhaps loved

beyond love.

“Listen.”

I could hear here telling

the students that they

could change the world.

I realized that she was no

ordinary teacher.

This was a sage.

“Feel.”

Love flowed.

“Close your eyes.”

I found myself in a room

filled with candles.

“Follow the spirit!”

I realized that I was not

alone.

In the room, the woman

chanted prayers to the

Buddha.

“Look around.”

Then, I realized that there

were now six women.

God was amongst them.

They joined together in an

engaged spirituality that

was different than the

religion that had come

before.

Their spirituality would be

one that takes place in the

streets.

I saw them give

themselves to the people.

God never left them.

Slowly, they became the

incarnation of love…of

justice.

“Watch.

I saw the woman begin to

write.

"I offer my body as a

torch…”

I couldn’t figure out what

she was talking about.

Then, I saw a spark.

“…to dissipate the dark…”

Then, I watched her

prepare.

I saw God there.

“…to awaken love among

all people…”

There was no question

that she was awake.

“…to give peace to

Vietnam."

Her words rippled

throughout the world.

“It’s time.”

Before I knew it, we were

off.

God was in front.

The Buddha was there too.

Christ held her hand.

I was just amazed.

Then, we arrived.

She marched up the steps.

Divinity bowed to the

holiness of the moment.

As she chanted words of

life…

She struck a match.

Flames went in every

direction.

I followed God.

We joined her.

As her chants rose to the

heavens, so did we.

In those moments, I knew

that peace would come.

She told us so.

Now, she is a torch that

can light up the soul…

…that can light up our

tomorrows…

“Look!”

I can still see her face.

She remains with us to

guide the way.

Just as quickly as it all had

happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where

I was before it all began.

Then again, I don’t recall

where I was. I only recall

where I went…and there

was no denying the truth

that remained...

“God Is in the flames.”

The Self-Immolation of

George Winne, Jr.

Historia Divina

Read

Meditate

Pray

Contemplate

Envision

Record

American Student George
Winne, Jr. self-immolated
at Revelle Plaza on the
campus of the University
of California, San Diego,
USA. In a vision, Christ
revealed to me the beauty
of the flames. Though the
vision is mine...it is also
yours. In fact, I
constructed this text for

you to join me. As you

proceed through this text,

I invite you to stop to

breathe prayers as you

finish the thoughts on

every page. Just as I did.

The beauty will find you.

Just as it did me.

I don't recall where I was.

I only recall where I went.

Deep in prayer, I met the

risen Christ. “Follow me!”

I couldn't speak. I started

to move. I didn't know

where I was going. I just

knew that I was moving.

Sometimes thus is the

nature of following Christ.

“There.”

I saw a young man

saluting the flag.

“There.”

I saw a young man

applying to a military

academy.

“There.”

I saw a young man

marching to the

commands of an ROTC

instructor.

“There.”

I could see the young man

becoming increasingly

despondent.

Something wasn’t right.

“Listen.”

I could hear his thoughts.

I realized that this was no

ordinary young man.

This was a true believer in

justice.

“Look.”

The young man kept

changing things in his life.

Nothing could shake his

increasing conviction that

the war in Vietnam was

wrong.

He had to do something.

But what could one person

do?

“Listen.”

The young man was trying

to figure out how to pray

with his feet.

I saw him becoming more

and more isolated.

Christ brought me in

closer.

I could hear him reaching

for God.

I was amazed at his desire

to see the hand of God in

the land of the living.

“There.”

Protests were growing in

the middle of campus.

The young man was

desperate to do more.

I could see a light welling

up within him.

I could see a

determination.

He already had all the fuel

he needed.

“It’s time.”

I sensed that something

powerful was coming.

“Close your eyes.”

God drew me to the side of

the young man.

Together, we walked into

the Plaza.

The young man held up a

sign.

“In the name of God, end

the war.”

Then, he lit the match.

Fire engulfed every part of

his body.

I stayed by his side.

God was there too.

The pain was immense.

Everything burned.

“Feel.”

This was the way of God.

Greater love has no one

than this…

“Stop the war.”

“Listen.”

“Stop the war.”

People tried to put the fire

out.

Eventually, we laid burnt

on the ground with him.

“Hear.”

Our father which 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

debts…

…as we forgive our

debtors…

…and lead us not into

temptation…

…but deliver us from

evil…

…for thine is the

kingdom…

…and the power…

…and the glory…

…forever and ever…

…amen.

I listened to the young

man repeat that prayer

incessantly.

“I will see you in heaven.”

He died later that night.

I was there.

We died too.

“Watch.”

I watched God raise his

body anew.

The eternal fire burned

brightly.

Christ was in him.

Christ is still in him.

Christ will be in him

forever.

I was changed.

The young man still lives...

...and the dream of peace

will never die.

Just as quickly as it all had

happened, it all ended.

I found myself back where

I was before it all began.

Then again, I don’t recall

where I was. I only recall

where I went…and there

was no denying the truth

that remained...

“God Is in the flames.”

May the God who is

forever able…guide your

heart…your mind…your

body…and your soul…

until all things are brought

to their perfect fruition.

Amen.