

# Community

## Building Community in a Separated World

### The Vision of Community

**How does one begin to build community?**

Many of us seek after it, but few find it in this day and age. Despite increasingly busy lifestyles, we often find ourselves feeling exhausted, empty and unfulfilled. We may even have a sense that there is something better out there on the horizon, a glimmering idea of possibility. *Somewhere between the busy day-to-day lifestyle and monastic seclusion exists the possibility of a spirit-filled life.*

### The Becoming Place

Community can be a “**becoming place**” toward the end of **communion**. Community is about joyful living and following the *paths and practices* that take us on the journey of **spiritual growth**. On this journey we move and transform by the continual renewing of our minds from one level to another, working our way through issues, fears and concepts of self and reality as we place our faith in God. It’s about seeing ourselves and others not as separate, ego-based individuals, but as children of God living in **communion** with one another and experiencing the pleromatic unity and joy-based living that exist in this place. We do this by putting on the mind of

Christ. Community is indeed a becoming place and most certainly about the “*perfecting of the saints*, edification, and ministry” (Eph 4:12).

### Communion

**Communities** are built around all kinds of dynamics. There are purpose-centered communities, project-centered communities, philosophically-centered communities, and others. **The Mission** begins by being purpose centered: *“Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4:13)

**Communion** can be a place where we act in sync with God and with each other. We act in a harmonious chorus that echoes and resounds His voice. It calls out across the vast chasms of time and space the songs of recognition, that we might know we are children of God.

**By** becoming a place where people practice their spiritual disciplines, the community can be an epicenter of **change and transformation**.

# Community Growth—The Upward Spiral

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The Community can become a place where a powerful dynamic develops. Individuals grow through their individual paths and practices and are supported by community, and the community grows because it is enriched by the individuals.

An Epicenter For Transformative Change...

Individual and community-wide growth go hand in hand. The idea is to create an upward spiral that goes something like this ... When individuals intentionally choose to grow spiritually, they begin to work within themselves and build self-awarenesses. New needs arise—not the least of which is a safe space, support, and accountability, which can come with numbers and diversity of experience. On a more specific level, community provides the individual with needed support and education about paths and practices that support personal growth.

As individuals grow and change, this builds a richer community-wide experience. The individual's growth becomes the community's growth. The experiences of individuals in community can begin to move toward *communio*n, a place where they live more and more in sync with each other and with God.

 The Mission

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