

Washington, D.C., Autumnal Equinox Street Retreat

September 20-23, 2018

Led by Roshi Grover Genro Gauntt

Sponsored by Silver Spring Zendo/One Heart Sangha

What Is a Street Retreat?

A street retreat is a plunge into the unknown. It is an opportunity to go beyond our imagined limits. It's the barest poke at renunciation. We will live on the streets of Washington with no resources other than our true nature, experiencing homelessness first hand, begging for money, finding food, shelter, bathrooms, etc. By bearing witness to homelessness, we begin to see our prejudices and boundaries directly and to recognize our common humanity. It is a way to experience our interconnection and realize our responsibilities.

"When we go... to bear witness to life on the streets, we're offering ourselves. Not blankets, not food, not clothes, just ourselves."

--Bernie Glassman, *Bearing Witness*

Street Retreat Logistics

Our group will be together almost all the time, breaking into packs for short periods during the day and always secured by buddies. We will meet twice a day for meditation, liturgy, and sharing circles. We will spend the night together as a group. Partial time participation is not an option. You can join only for the entire retreat.

Retreat Guidelines

- Do not shave or wash your hair for five days before the retreat. You will begin your street experience before leaving home. Please follow these guidelines:
- Besides the clothes you are wearing bring only an empty bag (shopping, plastic) or small (not new) day pack for collecting food from shelters, etc. Women may bring one change of underwear and intimate hygiene products. Wear old clothes, as many layers as you feel appropriate for the time of year. Bring a light blanket that will roll up--or you can wear it.
- Bring some kind of rain gear such as a poncho, preferably something old or makeshift.
- Wear good, but not new, walking shoes. We walk a great deal.
- Bring one piece of photo ID only, your driver's license or a state I.D.
- Do not bring any money, credit cards, illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, or cellphones.
- Do not wear any jewelry, including earrings and watches.
- Bring no books or conveniences or personal items such as a toothbrush.
- Prescription medications are fine.
- You may bring a plastic water bottle if you like or you can grab one from a trash can.

We will sleep on the streets and avoid shelters, so as not to take beds away from those in need.

Before the retreat, we will conduct an orientation for all those attending. You will meet your street cohorts and facilitators. We will discuss what to expect, but the unexpected will be the main teacher on the street.

The cost of the retreat is \$500. All funds will be donated: 2/3 to Homeless Service agencies that serve us in Washington, D.C., and 1/3 to the social-action missions of the Hudson River Peacemaker Community (the nonprofit sponsor of Roshi Grover Genro Gauntt's activities). Please ask donors to make checks out to Silver Spring Zendo. The money will be distributed to these agencies after the retreat.

To Participate, Participants Must Beg for the Entire Fee

You must ask friends, family, and associates to support you on this journey: we beg right from the beginning. You must explain to them your reasons for wanting to attend. You will be surprised at the results. We encourage you to report back to your donors after your experience, thus returning the gift. The retreat is limited to 12 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Sensei Grover Genro Gauntt will lead the retreat. He is a dharma successor of Roshi Bernie Glassman, founding member of the Zen Peacemakers and student of Taizan Maezumi Roshi for twenty-five years.

To learn more about bearing witness to homelessness, read *Bearing Witness: A Zen Master's Lessons on Living a Life That Matters* by Bernie Glassman. Available used and in a Kindle edition from Amazon.

This retreat will fill up quickly. If you plan to participate, please indicate your intention NOW. Retreat places will be finally reserved upon receipt of the entire mala donation. To register, or if you have questions, contact Sensei Bob Ertman, robertertman@msn.com.