
December, 2020

Greetings Dear Kin of Tau Center,

I, Sr. Georgene L. Wilson, have been invited by our Tau Center Director, Sharon Devo, to create a personal reflection around this Winter Solstice time. I have gathered some of my thoughts and art pieces to companion your spirit at this time of Earth's turning from darkness toward light. I am pleased to have been so invited. I am hopeful that bits of my sharing will both accompany you and nourish you in these times when we notice:

- Darkness lessening and light increasing,
- Fears of Covid19 inching toward the hope and healing, one iota at a time, with a promise of a vaccine, and
- The need for isolation and masks which are keep us physically healthy enough that seeds of hope for some communal gatherings are beginning to take root,
- And.....

Yes, you have your own way of naming these times, hopes and experiences. And your images are as good as mine. They are seeds, memories of the past and hopes for the future. They are images of new life, love, and relationships, of renewed prayer, hopes and plans that will emerge from today's reality, like wine comes from grapes that have ripened into NOW.

As you may remember if you have ever participated over the years in any of the teachings and/or reflections that I've offered at Tau Center, I live alone, as a present-day hermit or anchoress. These months of solitude have been a gift to me, rather than a burden as they may have been to you. I live day by day, now by now, in prayer, long periods of silence and gazing out into nature, but also in spiritual conversations and ministry to many via the phone and computer. Contemplative practices include playing via poetry reading and writing, artwork, and mental redecorating. They also look like spending time encircling the sick, the dying, the caregivers, and others suffering with just plain fear and loneliness, and others who serve and even those who sow fear and lies. All life is inter-being.

And yes, there is housekeeping, food preparations and crazy times of no-thingness! So, in this sharing with you I want to share some tidbits, seeds, or nuggets that I have gathered in places like my desk pad, in my journal, in a special Covid19 folder of inspirational "stuff". They come to me in books and hymns, Poems and Psalms, via others in notes or e-mails, or phone calls, TV programs, etc., and many times they come as intuitive sparks. In silence one never knows what's lurking, because silence is the language of God and heard in our hearts like "a feather on the breath of God", as Hildegard of Bingen poets. All of them are seeds of wisdom.

Here in this letter-like sharing, I will share some of them with you. I hope that they feed your heart. And I hope that you will begin collecting your own seeds of wisdom as we move through "winter" toward a "spring" of daily living. They can be your personal psalm book!

“Adopt the pace of nature, her secret is patience.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson

“The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament. – Brother Lawrence

“God creates. People rearrange.” -Joseph Casey

“There’s no need to seek truth; just stop cherishing your own opinions.”
– 3rd Zen Patriarch

The Summer Day

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean ---
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down ---
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don’t know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver
House of Light

“We are all the same....all the same....longing to find our way back...back to the One...Back to the only One!” -Rumi

“The deep wisdom of the Trinity is our mother in whom we are all enclosed.”

-Julian of Norwich

“We must educate the soul and not just the mind.” -Abraham Hessel

Invitation to Prayer*

Watch for the white rose.
See it in dreams delicious with beauty,
after diamond-winter snows,
in the midst of struggles and seasons,
and between journeys and jolts.

It appears as a whisper,
as a delicate light in deepest darkness,
as silence in terrible storms,
as bud emerging from thorny growth,
and as breast milk on an infant's lip.

It is the scent of mother love:
a holding of the Infinite and finite as one.
Behold this glimpse of glory.
Offer gratitude for its sighting.
Then quickly return to gazing.

You have done no-thing
to create such mystery.
It is gift. It is now. It is free.
Be gift. Be now. Be free.
Watch
for a white rose.

Georgene L. Wilson, OSF

***In the poem, THE DIVINE COMEDY, Dante envisions paradise and beholds the Trinity and Woman, representing Wisdom, Creation, Mary, seated on a white rose.**

“I believe in the healing energy of the feminine:
As a fire that can melt the frozen heart of the world;
As the artistry that will mend the tattered web of interconnection.

The more you intentionally turn inwards, the more available the Sacred becomes.

Contemplative life is not for the timid. It's scary to be quiet, and takes courage to be still.”
-Mirabai Star

“The important thing is not to think much, but to love much, and so to do whatever best awakens you to love.”
-Theresa of Avila

My letter to you continues.....

Another “Forest of Wisdom” that has seeded itself in me is that of the TREES themselves. They are my iconic creatures of connecting the Infinite and finite, heaven and earth, Creator and created, the way, as in direction, that the spirit incarnates and the way that creatures reenter divinity. Over the past many years I’ve gathered photos of trees and painted images of trees. I’ve written poems about trees. And I’ve read the “Novel”, where fiction is truth, THE OVERSTORY by Richard Powers. I highly recommend it to you. Whenever I hold a book in my hands I am touching trees who, in cooperation with people, issue paper!!!!

One of the insights that I had toward the beginning of our experiences with Covid19 was that humans have, first of all sinned by thinking that creation is “mine” rather than “ours”, and secondly, many have chosen to destroy the forests of Earth in order to mine, graze cattle or grow produce to make themselves financially “in charge.” It is no wonder to me that we have pandemics, for it is the trees that breathe their medicine upon Earth!!!! Ancient peoples knew this and honored trees. TREES OF LIFE art adorns many sacred sites of numerous spiritual communities.

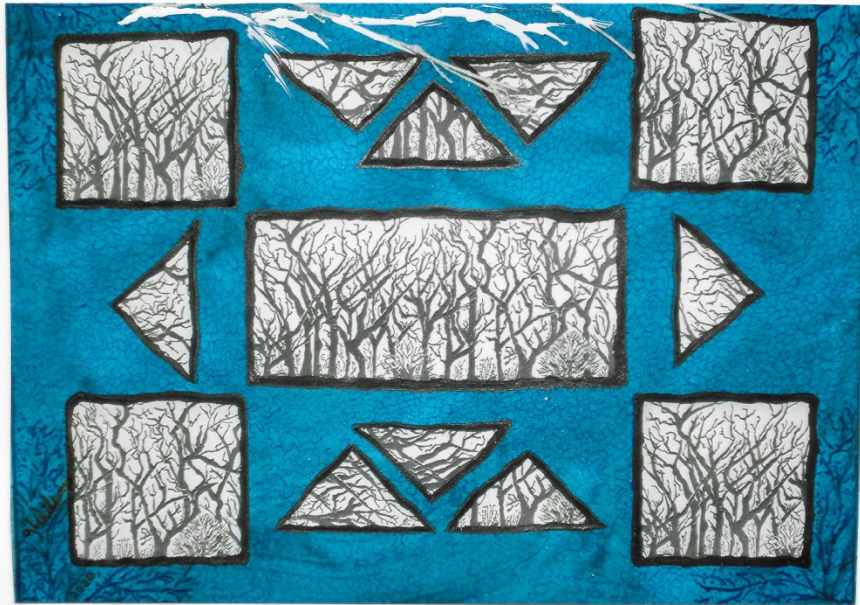
I leave the meditation on this insight to your own meditation and wisdom work. But in this sharing I do want to share with you some of the photos of trees that I’ve taken over the years, and some of my “tree themed” art work. I invite you to gaze into the spirit of each image.....gaze into it as if it were an icon or window into the Holy. As you ponder in silence may you become aware of when the icon changes from being a window into being a mirror and that it mirrors back to you the wisdom of this tree within yourself.

You can do this gazing prayer practice with any creature, really! Even your loved ones.....or with your not so loved ones! Try it with a picture of yourself, too. It’s a mystical prayer practice that awakens us to full communion and inter-being relationship among all. I think that this is the kind of prayer that St. Francis of Assisi practiced. It is why his manta chant prayer was: “My God and my All!”

As we enter the Winter Solstice time again, many people will decorate a tree as a symbol of connecting Heaven and Earth, the ONE-ING image of creation. So at this time my hope for you, for us is: May Solstice- Hanukkah-Christmas-Kwanzaa lights shine into your darkness's and may Earthly blessings be signs that you are on your way into the fullness of Love.

Georgene

Here are images of my photos and paintings: Enjoy! Gaze!



TRIBUTE TO THE TREES 'QUILT'
2020

g. Wilson

