

WILDERNESS WORDS

Editors

If there is anything that you would like to have included in the Newsletter: 218-388-9903 and dmc@chem.wayne.edu or pcoleman@chem.wayne.edu

This Sunday:

Leading: Lee
Preaching: Layne
Presiding: Carolyn S.

Readings this week:

Fifth Sunday in Lent

First Reading:
 Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm:
 Psalm 126
Epistle:
 Philippians 3:4b-14
Gospel:
 John 12:1-8

(Click on citation to go directly to the reading.)

Reflections:

by Teresa Rothausen

Lent is a time when we try to make certain practices more central in our lives. Traditionally these practices have been fasting, alms-giving, and prayer. Spiritual sacrifice, spiritual giving, and spiritual communion.



*Inviting Mystery, Embracing
 Compassion, Encountering Christ.*

Over the past couple of years, I have been increasingly interested in studying the role of intentional spiritual practices, and I've been trying to educate myself about them. No doubt many of you are much more expert than I! What strikes me at this stage of my study is how certain wisdom has to be re-discovered again and again, or perhaps more so in our own era where the pull toward segmentation, separation, and individualism is so strong. Spiritual practices are integrative and serve a larger, transcendent purpose of common good.

Two dimensions of these practices are becoming clearer to me. One is mind-heart-body-spirit (or, head, heart, gut, soul) and the power in engaging them together. Wisdom resides in each of these centers in every individual, and the spiritual practices can help us release the energy of each, and allow it to interact synergistically with wisdom from other centers. The second dimension is

collective-individual. Jesus was alone with God in the wilderness for 40 days and then in communion with those who followed and adored him as well as those who despised and rejected him. We are also called to develop our own, personal, private, and very individual relationship with God, and to be in relationship with God with our sisters and brothers.

What an amazing and beautiful array of practices I've learned about. Take prayer for example. Many of us pray by rote or by talking to God as a Person we imagine (in my case, a loving Mother). Communally we tend to read prayers. This is a rich and beautiful tradition. And, our traditions also contain rich and beautiful examples of and guidance on contemplative and meditative prayer. It seems to me as if Western society has forgotten these. And, each of those three types of prayer contains myriad possibilities within it. It is the same for other practices such as discernment, examining oneself, keeping spiritual notes, active engagement in vocation, reading scriptures, and studying the lives of the saints (whether canonized formally or not). To me this feels like a wonderful box of rediscovered treasures to explore.

Save these Dates

Tuesday, March 8th: Ruby's Pantry. See Notes.

March 4th - 26th: SOTW 2016 Art Show at the Johnson Heritage Post continues. See Notes!

Sunday, March 20th: Forum. Carol Mork on the Passion Narrative after hearing them in the reading at worship that morning.

Thursday, March 24th: Seder @ Howard & Bonnie Hedstroms' home. Hillary is facilitator. See Notes!

Friday, March 25th: Good Friday Service @ the Dental Office.

Sunday, April 3rd: Forum after Church by Inger Andress. Discussion of sexual predation by older men in Cook County.

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NOTE: During Mary Ellen's sabbatical leave Carolyn has graciously agreed to be contacted as needed.

What a relief it is to integrate mind, heart, body, and soul, both alone and in community. This is why we stand up and sit down in worship, or kneel to pray, or listen to and play and sing sacred music, or serve together, or pause to appreciate art or our amazing wilderness setting. Sometimes we rush through these as if the "real" or "important" center of wisdom is intellect. We do this individually and collectively. Lent is a time to remove things that get in the way of our slowing down to more fully engage our practices. My wish for each of us and for us collectively is that our practices enrich each life, and prepare us for service toward life "on earth as it is in heaven." Teresa

Notes:**1.) Spirit of the Wilderness 2016 Art Show:**

"Sense of Wonder: Expressing This Place" continues through March 26th. What a wonderful show, and gala opening we experienced. Kudos to *all* who made this possible! Questions? Contact **Ellen Stubbs** 663-7298

2.) Ruby's Pantry, Tuesday March 8th:

Today!! March 8. Arrival around 3:00 and we can start setting up the gym and unload the trailers.

**3.) Seder Details, Thursday, March 24:**

If you are planning to join us for the Seder meal on Thursday, March 24th at 5:00 at Howard and Bonnie Gays' we need to know! We can make sure we have enough food for one and all. If you can come let me know how many people and what you are bringing. We need: desserts, appetizers, salads and wine. At this point we have 17 folks. Please e-mail me at LSGADS15@gmail.com **Hillary Freeman**

4.) Palm Sunday: Passion Reading

Readers are needed for the Passion Reading Palm Sunday; if interested email **Val Groth** at vgturtle1@gmail.com. A sign-up sheet will also be at Church March 13. I will assign by whoever responds first for a particular part: Narrator (Karl); Jesus; Peter; Disciples (entire congregation); Servant Girl; Bystander; Soldiers; Priests; Pilate; Crowd (entire congregation); Criminal 1; Criminal 2; Centurion.

We also need volunteers to read the Lessons & Psalm of the Day.