



There is a spirit in the woods 12.4.11 (Marty Lau 2011)

Thin Places

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What are your plans for tomorrow? . . .

by the Rev. Barbara Lund

"The cosmos works by a harmony of tensions, like the lyre and bow."

Heraclitus, *The Fragments*

A dense fog hugged the ground, pushed its way up and washed around us on the bridge. The rapid currents resounded, and we knew the waters plunged the depths. With the ascent of the fog, the blowing mist began to soften on our faces while the play of light was breaking through and revealing our surroundings. It was an unforgettable moment of calm beauty on the edge of a demanding city. The Golden Gate Bridge, a sensory beauty with vistas of color, light and sound. A threshold—an entry to San Francisco Bay . . . or to the expansive Pacific.

In this permeable fog, I was aware that this formidable bridge holds beauty and vulnerability. As my friend and I walked and wandered around, we walked the way of another person who traverses the bridge with a defined mission. Kevin Briggs, a California motorcycle patrolman, is on the bridge to talk potential jumpers back from the edge. In this thin slice of time, Briggs asks two questions, "How are you feeling?" "What is your plan for tomorrow?" Ordinary questions for most of us on any given day.

But when Kevin Briggs asks, he is reaching out to someone standing in a thin place at the edge of the bridge. He is reaching into mystery—a vulnerability of the human spirit that is hard to understand. How do we grapple with what it means to be human and trust that the Divine permeates our being? How do I?

Three years ago on a splendid Saturday in October, when all creation seemed dressed up for an occasion, a "harmony of tensions" plunged me into turbulent currents. I suppose I was so engaged in life that I had forgotten how fragile we are and how tenuous life can be. A loved one, my brother, may have noticed the leaves and felt the air that day as I did, however he stood at a perilous threshold and ended his life.

My human heart pleaded with the Divine Heart for truth. I wanted to make sense of

"Plans for tomorrow?" . . . continues on page 2

Look for *Thin Places* at: www.thinplaces.us or www.eWestminster.org/thin_places

my brother's death. Viscerally. In a moment, I was standing in unfamiliar terrain. My being was filled with vexing questions that rendered only elusive answers.

I cried out prayers that I had never breathed, acknowledged or spoken. A thick fog pressed down on a complexity of emotions. All that was sure . . . familiar . . . balanced . . . and ordered was ripped apart. I searched more intensely for meaning, belonging and understanding. How can beauty on a bridge, or a fall day, be overcome by desperate despair? This journey of deep grief awakened me and gently moved me more profoundly to a Holy Thin Place—a place beyond all that I had previously known.

It was in nature that I began to experience my grounding again. Perhaps because nature's cycles speak to pain and beauty. In the city, I go often to walk through Theodore Wirth Park and the Quaking Bog. I am reminded of the vital community of life—birches dance, tamaracks shade the understory sphagnum moss, dragonflies and frogs abide while the songbirds make music. Tufts of rabbit tails appear, and hawks and eagles lurk. A vitality of life that includes struggle.

In this place, I can pray more easily because it is less about words and more about solitude.

Waiting, listening and walking invite a welcome rawness of feeling. I sense a Knowing Presence. When I walk here, I experience a meditative way of letting go and of being. I can embrace my brother among the sorrows and minor key songs where roots go deep. Here fragile life carries on conversations with the Eternal Heart. Here conversations reach to the core of my human heart and open a way to be a part of something greater, to be loved, to find peace.

Nature holds space for life and death. Like Kevin Briggs, we hold space for life and relationships. "How are you feeling?" "What are your plans for tomorrow?" Everyday in ordinary ways we hold each other . . . and we learn to let go . . . sometimes finding ourselves in thin places.

What is sure is that Mystery, Holy Mystery, cradles all—the visible and invisible . . .

Barbara Lund, an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, directs Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in St. Paul. Following years of work that primarily focused in Asia and the Pacific, Barbara is grateful to have returned to the Twin Cities from Chicago to deepen her roots in this area. She may be reached at: blund@wisdomwayscenter.org.

Becoming a Spiritual Director . . .

Learning to Listen with the Ear of God's Heart

It is not unusual for those who have become more intentional about their own spiritual journey, who feel a yearning or hunger, to wonder if they might be being called to become a spiritual companion to others, a spiritual director. Fortunately, there are three proven programs in the Twin Cities area that are open to all who may feel a pull in this direction.

Becoming a spiritual director is a two-year, reflective journey of self-knowledge and discernment, a path of listening deeply to the Spirit. There are subjects to be studied—the history of Christian spirituality and spiritual direction, discernment, faith and human development, types of prayer and scripture, and more. There are skills to be learned. And many programs also have a formal, facilitated supervision process where class work is completed to nurture the new director's abilities to be present to another.

But what is most important in every program is being fully open to the Spirit and to one's own inner journey. . . is recognizing that the real director is the Holy Spirit. Thus, the spiritual director's function is only to assist, much the way a midwife assists in the delivery of a baby. It is not pastoral counseling or psychotherapy; it is listening with the Ear of God's heart.

Many students enter spiritual direction training programs through a desire to explore their faith journey and how the Holy might be calling them to grow. Although

Go to the Limits of Your Longing

"God speaks to each of us as he makes us, then walks with us silently out of the night.

These are the words we dimly hear:

'You, sent out beyond your recall,
go to the limits of your longing.
Embody me.

Flare up like a flame
and make big shadows I can move in.

Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.
Just keep going. No feeling is final.
Don't let yourself lose me.

Nearby is the country they call life.
You will know it by its seriousness.

Give me your hand."

Rainer Maria Rilke

they may not be certain if becoming a spiritual director is how God is calling them, they are open to the possibility. But whatever it is that draws people to these formation programs, it invariably leads to their being a more compassionate presence with themselves, God, and others. And it enhances their sense of ministry in their lives, whatever that turns out to be.

All three spiritual direction formation/education programs in the Twin Cities are Christian-based and are open to all denominations. Although each is unique, they all emphasize personal spiritual and psychological growth.

To learn more, to explore the opportunities each one offers, all are invited to contact them directly:

- **Sacred Ground Center for Spirituality**
Michele Krakowski at 651.696.2798 or www.sacredgroundspirit.org.
- **Christos Center for Spiritual Formation**
Patricia Hendricks at 651.653.8207 or www.christoscenter.com.
- **St. Catherine University** (a graduate program)
Kay Vander Vort at 651.690.6603 or www.stkate.edu.

A Reader Writes

"From my experience, what people receive from a spiritual director is a listening presence. The first time I met mine, I was awed by the experience of someone being totally present to me. Her posture was open and relaxed. She never interrupted. Her body language didn't cause me to rush through my story. She calmly accepted my tears and my times of pause. She had no agenda. She respected my story, and she waited.

In time, I found myself looking forward to my one-hour monthly meetings with one who had become my spiritual companion. I saw her in no other capacity. The objectivity of that made our time together a place of safety—a place where I could process anything in my life. She would listen; then ask a few questions that enabled my concern or my longing to go to a deeper place, a place of insight and truth.

Ultimately, my spiritual director has helped me to open—and to re-open and re-open—my heart and mind to God."

Do you know of anyone who might like to receive *Thin Places?* (It's sent free to all who request it.)

Or do you know of an up-coming Opportunity that might be of interest to others?

If 'yes' to either, please contact Kathy Fisher at:
kfisher@wpc-mpls.org or 612.332.3421.

Especially for those in Central Minnesota:

Taizé Prayer

Gather for an hour of prayer to experience Christ's presence. Encounter the mystery of God through the beauty of simplicity. Allow yourself to be open and receptive and let the prayers permeate your mind. Hear scripture readings, prayer petitions and songs initiated by a song leader. Relax deeply and healing and transformation happens.

The prayer of Jesus "that all may be one" is your special invitation to come. People of all faith traditions are welcome!:

First Thursdays (April 7, May 5), 6:00-7:00 p.m.

also:

Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina

Centering Prayer is an ancient and contemporary way of prayer. It is a simple method of alert receptivity and consent to God's presence. Gather with the sisters and members of all faiths to ponder God's presence in your life. Prepare yourself to receive the gift of a closer union with God during 20 minutes of silence.

Then there will be a time for Lectio Divina:

Many Third Thursdays (May 19), 6:00-7:00 p.m.

St. Francis Convent, Little Falls, in the Gathering Space
For information: 320.632.0668 or www.fslf.org or franciscanlife@fslf.org.

Sacred Journey

Join this intergenerational group of progressive Christians as they embrace God, Creation and Community through music, ritual, prayer and art.

Laura Caviani, jazz pianist and composer, is joined every Sunday by Steve Blons on guitar to provide a wide variety of music for this worship experience.

We intentionally focus on including all ages and try each Sunday to incorporate our whole being, all senses, in worship:

"This much I have learned . . .

that within the sorrow there is grace. When we come close to the things that break us down, we touch those things that also break us open.

This is the point of healing: when we have told the story, we can leave the story behind. What remains is hidden wholeness, alive and unbroken. . . . "

Wayne Muller
How, then, Shall We Live?

Every Sunday, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church,
in the Art Gallery

511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis

For information: 612.871.5305 or sally@haumc.org or
www.hennepinchurch.org.

Good Friday Benedictine Day of Prayer

In addition to morning and noon worship with the monks, participants learn the practice of *lectio divina* as taught by one of the monastic community. And there is ample time for private reflection and prayer.

Other opportunities while at St. John's include seeing original manuscripts of the St. John's Bible at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, taking a walk to the lovingly renovated Stella Maria Chapel, or simply enjoying the opportunity to walk the beautiful campus.

All are warmly welcomed:

Friday, April 22, 6:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

also:

Friday, May 27—6:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

[If you'd like to come the night before, rooms are available in the new Guesthouse, at modest cost.]

St. John's Abbey, Collegeville

For information or registration: 320.363.3929 or
Spirlife@osb.org or www.saintjohnsabbey.org/retreats.

The Service of Light: Holy Saturday Quiet Worship

Holy Saturday is a quiet day, a day of waiting. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday are past. It is not a dark day for us—as it must have been on that first Saturday—for we know the rest of the story, that Easter morning will come. For us it can be a day of quiet but joyful anticipation.

This Prayer is a time to be quiet and to be present to God's love—in the stillness and the beauty of the Chapel—as we wait in anticipation:

Saturday, April 23, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

also:

"You shall be like a Garden . . . "

Saturday, May 21 (the 3rd Saturday), 9:00-10:00 a.m.

and:

"Rejoicing in the goodness of the earth . . . "

June 25 (regular 4th Saturday), 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church, in the Chapel

1200 Marquette Avenue, Minneapolis

Information: 612.332.3421 or kfisher@wpc-mpls.org.

"Psalms, Sung and Prayed"**The Eighth Annual*****Thin Places* Ecumenical Worship Service**

A frequently received comment continues to be, "I love being a part of the *Thin Places* ecumenical community," and once each year ***Thin Places* readers are invited to come together in prayer.**

This year we will gather in the Chapel for sung prayers from Taizé, for spoken and silent prayer; for readings from the *Psalms*, and rich litanies from various traditions; for the music of ancient Celtic instruments, and times for silence.

Following worship we shall move in procession to The Agape Table. All who come are invited to place a **gift of food for the Food Shelf . . .** or a flower . . . or a poem . . . or whatever seems appropriate for a "love feast" . . . on the Agape Table, there to be Blessed.

After the Blessing, we'll gather around other tables in the Heller Commons for Scottish Scones and Tea and fellowship.

And as this evening together ends, following the three-fold example set for us in Luke 6:12-19—where Jesus

- first came to God in **prayer**,
- gathered his disciples together in **community**,
- and then went out to do **ministry**—

we shall be sent back out into the world, to serve as each of us is called:

Thursday, May 12, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1200 Marquette Avenue, Minneapolis

Information:

612.332.3421 or kfisher@wpc-mpls.org.

In the Sweet Song of the Birds

"Lonely valleys are quiet, pleasant, cool
shady and flowing with fresh water;
in the variety of their groves
and in the sweet song of the birds,
they afford abundant recreation and delight,
and in their solitude and silence
they refresh and give rest.

These valleys are what my Beloved is to me."

St. John of the Cross
The Spiritual Cantic

Soup & Sabbath: The Golden Rule in World Religions

Come for a simple soup supper and fellowship. Stay for prayer and reflection on how the Golden Rule is present in all the world's faith traditions:

Three Mondays—April 4, 11, 18—6:30-8:00 p.m.

Sabbath House, 3228 Portland Ave. So., Minneapolis
For information or registration: 612.822.2623 or
sabbathhouse@fslf.org or www.fslf.org.

Thomas Merton and Mary Oliver:**Poets of the Sacred**

Merton and Oliver are unique writers who resonate when they converge on aligning their lives with Wisdom in their poetry's approach to nature and the feminine.

In addition to praying with the monks of Gethsemani, this retreat will celebrate with reflections on Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom) as the feminine energies of God [Merton] and Wisdom as living a life of praise within Nature's embrace [Oliver].

Participants will discern their need to recover the "unheard feminine voice" within themselves, whether they be man or woman. Living in consonance with Wisdom's ways is foundational to experiencing the depths of our core relationships with ourselves, our neighbors, nature and the Source of all relationships, God.

Each participant will also receive Mary Oliver's latest volume of poetry, *Thirst*:

Friday, April 8, at 6:00 p.m.-Sunday, April 10, at noon

Bethany Springs, Retreat Center of the Merton Institute
Outside Louisville, KY, near the Abbey of Gethsemani
For information or registration: www.bethanyspring.org
or 800.886.7275 or ecaskey@mertoninstitute.org.

Deepening 12-Step Spirituality

We will explore Centering Prayer as a way to deepen the spirituality people experience when practicing these Steps. Presenters include members of 12-Step programs who are also long-time practitioners (and certified teachers) of Centering Prayer. Each workshop includes instructions, teaching, testimonials, group discussion and a 20-minute session of Centering Prayer:

Two Saturdays, April 9 and May 14, 9:00 a.m.-noon

Colonial Church of Edina, 6200 Colonial Way, Edina
For information or registration: 952.474.8160 or
step12spirituality@yahoo.com.

also

True Self ~ False Self

This reflective workshop will invite us to discover:

- How true self and false self develop.
- How our identities are shaped by the rhythms of attachment and detachment.

- How we move from the isolated self to the integrated, Christ-companioned self.
- How certain practices can foster awareness and intentionality.
- How tending to our own personal transformation process equips us to companion others in their process.

Saturday, April 9, 9:00 a.m.-noon

Sponsored by Christos Center for Spiritual Formation
Held at Colonial Church of Edina, in the Fireside Room
Information or registration: joycechristoscenter@msn.com
or 651.653.8207 or www.christoscenter.org.

Spirituality of the Second Half of Life:**Crossing the Sacred Threshold to Deeper Love**

Playwright, speaker and seeker **Paula D'Arcy** will explore her understanding that "the Second Half of Life is not a matter of having more elevated thoughts, but of a different reality—the movement into actual embodiment of faith."

And this movement is the second of the two major tasks in the human spiritual journey. The task of the first half of life is to create the proper container for one's life. The task of the second half of life is to find the actual contents that this container was meant to hold and deliver.

All are invited to join in a special evening of spiritual discourse and discovery:

Wednesday, April 13, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

University of St. Thomas, O'Shaughnessy Center
(The program is sponsored by the Redbird Foundation, the Center for Action and Contemplation, and the Minnesota Chapter of Men as Learners and Elders.)
For information or registration: dan.carr@comcast.net or
www.pauladarcymnmales.eventbrite.com.

While Deep Below the Living Waters Run

"Spirit cuts like water through it all
Carving out this emptiness
So inner eye can see.

The soaring height of the canyon walls within
Walls whose very color, texture, form
Redeem in beauty all my life has been
The darkness and the light, the false, the true
While deep below the living waters run
Cutting deeper through my parts
To resurrect my gravebound heart
Making, always making, all things new."

"Grand Canyon"
by Parker Palmer

also, coming again to Minnesota:

"Men's Rites of Passage," June 22nd to June 26th

Presented by CAC and its Minnesota chapter of Men as Learners and Elders

For information or registration: www.malespirituality.org.

Westminster Town Hall Forum:

Marcus Borg, "Putting Away Childish Things"

For the last thirty years the Westminster Town Hall Forum has sought to engage the public in reflection and dialogue on the key issues of our day from an ethical perspective. Next up is Marcus Borg who will draw upon his newest, his nineteenth book, *Putting Away Childish Things: A Tale of Modern Faith*, as he explores the important issues challenging Christians today.

Gathering music begins at 11:30 a.m.:

Thursday, April 14, Noon-1:30 p.m.

also:

David Brooks, Thursday, March 31, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

"The Social Animal: Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement," and

Frederic Luskin, Thursday, May 5, Noon-1:30 p.m.

"The Power of Forgiveness"

Westminster Presbyterian Church, in the Sanctuary
1200 Marquette Avenue Minneapolis

Information: 612.322.3421 or kfisher@wpc-mpls.org.

Taizé Retreat: "Being Present"

You will experience the silence and calm of a monastery setting by surrendering to this gentle form of prayer, a prayer that helps you experience the peace of God:

Friday, April 15, at 7:00 p.m.-Sat., April 16, 1:00 p.m.

The Inner History of a Day

"No one knew the name of this day;
Born quietly from deepest night,
It had its face in light,
Demanded nothing for itself,
Opened out to offer each of us
A field of brightness that traveled ahead,
Providing in time, ground to hold our footsteps
And the light of thought to show the way. . . .
So at the end of this day, we give thanks
For being betrothed to the unknown
And for the secret work
Through which the mind of the day
And wisdom of the soul become one."

John O'Donohue
To Bless the Space Between Us

also:

Triduum Retreat

Join the monastic community in celebrating these most holy days of the Christian year and in deepening your appreciation of the narratives, the symbols, and the lived experience of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday:

Thurs., April 21, at 6:00 p.m.-Sat., April 23, 9:00 p.m.

The Benedictine Center, St. Paul's Monastery
2675 Benet Road, St. Paul

For information or registration: 651.777.7251 or
www.stpaulsmonastery.org.

Wisdom Ways Book Read: An Altar in the World

What makes Barbara Brown Taylor's books so compelling to so many readers? In this her latest book, this gifted storyteller offers a compendium of twelve spiritual practices that emerge for "wearing skin," from living in and loving the world: engaging in the work of "becoming more fully human, trusting that there is no way to God apart from real life . . . in the real world."

Our conversation will begin with three perspectives on the book from three experienced presenters and then open itself to the comments, insights and questions of us all:

Thursday, May 5, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality
Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul

For information or registration:

wisdomways@csjstpaul.org or 651.696.2788 or
www.wisdomwayscenter.org.

"Heart, One Mind, One Universe"

The Dalai Lama Returns to the Twin Cities

His Holiness' visit—his first official to the Twin Cities since 2001—will include two public events:

- "Medicine Buddha Empowerment: A Tibetan Cultural and Spiritual Ceremony," **May 8, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**
- "Peace Through Inner Peace: A Public Address,"

May 8, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Both will be at the Mariucci Arena on the U of M campus. The visit is sponsored by the University of Minnesota's Center for Spirituality and Healing, and the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota.

For information: www.dalailama.umn.edu.

Forgiveness and Healing

A Healing Retreat for men and women. We all need healing, and lots of it. Whether it is physical healing from illness or emotional, psychological or spiritual healing, the need is universal. Jesus came to Heal.

(continued at right on Page 7)

Contemplative Prayer, by Thomas Merton

In introducing Thomas Merton's last writing on prayer, Douglas Steere begins with oft-quoted lines:

"We are put on earth a little space that we may learn to bear the beams of love."

"It would be hard to find," he adds, "a more suitable way to sum up Merton's account of contemplative prayer." For in these lines William Blake gives us a clue "to the greatness of the human condition—that it is irradiated by love—but also a firm reminder of how much remains to be done to prepare us 'to bear the beams of love.' Here is our longing for exposure to the beams of love—and yet our fear of what may be involved if we come within its transforming power."

If to pray means to change, "it is no wonder that people (even devoted men and women) hurry to fashion protective clothing, leaden aprons that resist all radiation—even beam-proof shelters within corporate religious exercise—in order to elude the beams of love and to stay where they are."

In his final testament to us before his accidental death, Merton "does little but to point to the 'beams of love' that surround us, and then to compel us to acknowledge our contrived hiding places."

ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITIES

So our first focus is on him. The one unifying factor for all healing, on every level and on every dimension, is the need for forgiveness. Whether it is personal forgiveness that overcomes feelings of guilt or forgiving others for injuries caused, forgiveness is the key to healing. Exploring the theme of forgiveness will be the heart of this weekend retreat:

Fri., May 20, at 7:00 p.m.-Sun., May 22 at 12:45 p.m.

Christ the King Retreat Center, Buffalo, MN

For information or registration: 763.682.1394 or

www.kingshouse.com or christtheking@kingshouse.com.

Touching the Face of God:**A North Shore Nature Retreat**

Rest, reconnect with nature and explore the wonders of this majestic area on the north shore of Lake Superior.

This will be a contemplative nature retreat, designed to help you deepen your relationship with God in the natural world. Some camping experience required:

Thurs., June 2, later afternoon—Sun., June 5, at noon

Tettegouch State Park, near Silver Bay, MN

Both retreats sponsored by the Loyola Spirituality Center
Information, registration: info@loyolaspiritualitycenter.org
or 651.641.0008 or www.loyolaspiritualitycenter.org.

This may seem a negative task, "to seek to strip men and women of their cloaks of evasion, to leave them exposed before the necessary decision, but how else is one to describe genuine prayer? Prayer—if it is real—is an acknowledgement of our finitude, our need, our openness to be changed, our readiness to be surprised."

Contemplative Prayer is not an operational manual, "like his admirable little essay on *Spiritual Directions*, but an exploration of the very nature of prayer."

Here are some of Merton's words:

"We do not want to be beginners [at contemplative prayer]. But let us be convinced of the fact that we will never be anything else but beginners, all our life!"

"Meditation has no point and no reality unless it is rooted in life. . . . The love of others is a stimulus to interior life, not a danger to it. As Abbé Monchanin, a great contemplative of our time says, 'Let us keep alive the flame of thought and love: they are one and the same flame. Let us communicate to those around us the desire to understand and to give, and also to receive. There are too many walled-up consciences.'"

"In meditation we should not look for a 'method' or 'system.' But cultivate an 'attitude,' an 'outlook': faith, openness, attention, reverence, expectation, supplication, trust, joy. All these finally permeate our being with joy. . . ." And there is more.

Lessons learned, understandings gained by Merton during his years of study and his daily practice of prayer:

Contemplative Prayer, by Thomas Merton

Where Life Can Be Found

"The present moment is where life can be found.

And if you don't arrive there, you miss your appointment with life.

You don't have to run anymore. Breathing in, you can say, 'I have arrived.' Breathing out, you can say, 'I am home.'

This is very strong practice, a very deep practice. . . "

Thich Nhat Hanh
The Present Moment



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**“What are your plans for tomorrow?”
Eighth Annual Thin Places Ecumenical
Worship Service**



AFTERWORDS: “Incarnation . . .”

A church meeting with members of the Disability Concerns Taskforce. One panelist reminded us, “We are not defined by our disability.” And another said that when we meet a person with a disability, we may too often see the disability rather than the person . . . or, even more, may not see that person's giftedness.

This assertion was immediately accepted, intellectually. But then a flashback to the early 1970s: recently returned from active duty, still with a crew cut . . . moving to a new city and joining the faculty of a large university, in the Department of English . . . and in that Vietnam era time of protest (and long hair), discovering that many colleagues were unable to see beyond the crew cut. The haircut apparently defined the person. And the second panelist's assertion was suddenly understood, deeply and personally.

Then at that church meeting, almost as immediately, “Incarnation” was more than a familiar theological concept. That “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,” became real and deep and personal . . . recognition flooding forth: “Somehow, too often, *like just now!*, I don't get it! Just don't really and truly get it, unless it touches what I have seen and experienced.”

And then a third time. The Sunday sermon text was *Matthew 25:31-45*:

“ . . . [and they] will answer him,

‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? . . . ’

And the king will answer them,

‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of . . . these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’” NRSV

A church meeting . . . Incarnation . . . Jesus born of Mary . . . Christ present in the eyes of each one I meet . . .

“Help me, Lord!

Help me to see the person in everyone I meet.

Lord, even more, help me to see the giftedness in every person I meet. . . . ”