

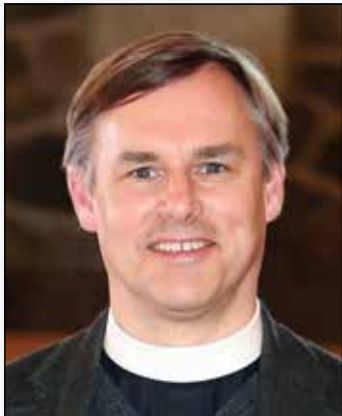


THE CALL

ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

NO. 395
SUMMER 2022

Summer Reading



The Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole

LIKE MANY OF YOU, I look forward to the summer as a time of refreshment and renewal. It is glorious being outside in the summer weather and I love going up to our lakeside cottage in Maine where I feel at one with God in the beauty of nature. I find summer not only a time of physical and mental reinvigoration, but also a time of spiritual renewal. As I sit on the dock at our cottage looking at the beautiful lake and the vast expanse of the summer sky, I experience the majesty of God's creation opening up my soul to make me reflect on what my life is about and how I fit into God's created order. I greatly value this time to step away from the busy-ness of my ordinary life for self-reflection about the direction God may be wishing my life to take. I always take a big pile of books with me, usually a mixture of novels, theology, and other non-fiction. It is often in reading some of these books that I discover God opening up new insights to the questions I ask about

life. I am already building up a pile of books to take with me to Maine this summer!

I wanted to take this opportunity to recommend two books I recently read that have spoken to me spiritually. They would make great summer reading. They are both very well written and accessible—and also relatively short with both of them being only just over 200 pages!

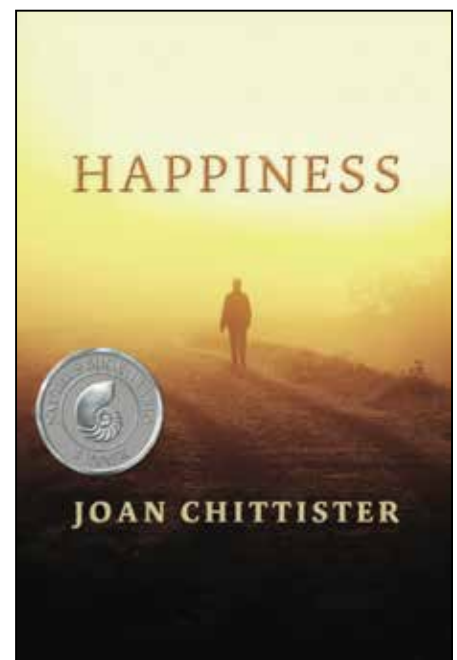
The first book is titled *Happiness* by Joan Chittister, who is a Benedictine nun and an award-winning spirituality writer. In the book, Chittister explores different definitions of happiness including from the classical tradition, such as from Aristotle, as well as more contemporary sociological definitions. She also looks at how happiness is understood in the Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian traditions. She ends the book with one of the best discussions of the Beatitudes I have ever read. For me, her explanation of Christ's teaching in the Beatitudes gives us a definition of what it is to live a fulfilled life.

One of the outstanding things about the book is how accessible it is. She is a fine writer who hands us so much wisdom and research in such an easy and open style. On the back cover, Rabbi Michael Lerner of *Tikkun* magazine writes, "Joan Chittister has hit another home run with her book *Happiness*. Already a contemporary saint and an embodiment of the spiritual elder 'wise woman,' Sister Joan draws her insights not only from the most profound philosophers and every major religious tradition both

East and West, but also from her experience of a life well lived, consciously lived, beautifully lived. This book has gems and insights in every chapter that will guide and awaken the reader to the rich possibilities of life."

The second book I want to recommend is equally well written and titled *From Strength to Strength* by Arthur C. Brooks. I bought this book on the recommendation of a review I read in a newspaper, not realizing that the author was a committed person of Christian faith, which he reveals halfway through the book. The subtitle of the book is "Finding success, happiness, and deep purpose in the second half of life" and it has a recommendation from the Dalai Lama

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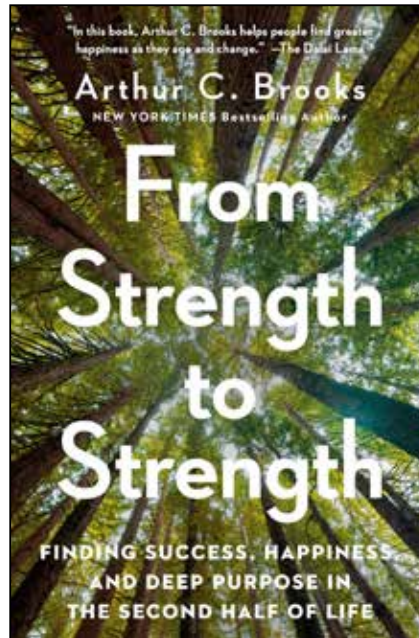
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Congratulations Class of 2022

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"Summer Reading" continued



on the front cover: "In this book, Arthur C. Brooks helps people find greater happiness as they age and change."


But I believe this book is a spiritual gem for people of any age and I would love to have read this book in my younger years. As Eric Schmidt, former chairman and CEO of Google, writes on the back cover "From Strength to Strength offers real answers to timeless questions about meaning and progress: How can I be happier? How can I have more meaning in life? What is most important to me right now and why?"

Like Joan Chittister's book *Happiness*, part of the gift of *From Strength to Strength* is the wealth of research and wisdom from a range of traditions offered to us in such an accessible style, interspersed with great illustrations from the lives of some well-known people. In Brooks' discussion on what makes for a well lived life, he draws on insights from neurobiology, Buddhism, Hinduism, and his own deep Christian faith.

And if you get through these two books and are still looking for something else to read, you can never go wrong with Dostoyevsky's spiritual masterpiece, *The Brothers Karamazov*—but you might need an extended vacation to get through that book!

Whether you chose to read any of these books, I wish you a very happy summer, with a time for rest, refreshment, and joy! And among all of this, I hope you will find yourself with opportunities to connect spiritually with God, whether through a book, the beauty of nature, in time of quiet prayer, seeing the face of Christ in someone you encounter, or through acts of loving service.

Happy Summer!
Yours in Christ,



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St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



St. John's Anglican Church, the first Anglican church in the Bahamas

Warden's Message

Sharing Our Faith



Will Nystrom, warden

“LOVE MY LIFE!” Adrian's Easter morning proclamation is still ringing in my ears. Add to that the amazing music of Wardie Mannix and the choir, the gorgeous flowers, and over 600 people attending Easter services online and in church, I was so inspired by the good news of Jesus' resurrection, and God's love for us all. But now the hard part comes. We must try to carry this inspiration forward into the summer

months when our church and our faith may seem a bit farther away.

Suzanne and I traveled recently to Harbor Island in the Bahamas, which is one of our favorite holiday spots. We always try to attend services on Sunday at St. John's Anglican Church, the first Anglican church in the Bahamas, originally built in 1768. There are no more than two dozen parishioners. And Father Brown has been the rector for over 40 years. The music comes from an old, amplified guitar and a choir of six stalwart Bahamian women belt out the same hymns we sing each Sunday.

With no Sunday leaflet, we struggle to find our place in the Book of Common Prayer, which is ordered differently from ours. But kind parishioners come over and show us how to follow along. During announcements, we are asked to stand and tell a bit about ourselves. The congregation claps and welcomes us.

After church, Father Brown puts

his arms around us and asks us to join everyone for sandwiches and "souise," a traditional Bahamian dish of meat, broth, potatoes, and peppercorns. It is delicious.

Our daughter Hazel, and her friend Gabby, happen to walk by while we are on the church lawn and join in the conversation and treats. And suddenly we are no longer visitors to a beautiful island, but members in a community of faith.

That morning was one of my favorite moments on vacation. And it reminds me that there are thousands of St. Andrew's across the United States and the world. Thousands of congregations gathering together, praying for one another, and sharing their faith. What a comforting thought.

So, if you have the chance this summer, when you are away from St. Andrew's, pop into a church on Sunday. You may leave feeling refreshed and inspired. Have an amazing summer!



Advent in July



The Rev. Margaret K. Schwarzer

sab-bat-i-cal *n.* 1. a period of time during which someone does not work at his or her regular job and is able to rest, travel, or do research 2. a break or change from a normal routine in employment (Merriam-Webster)

ADVENT IS A SEASON of preparation we expect to begin in November, but this year, I will get a second Advent which will unfold in June, July, and part of August. After six years of priestly work at St. Andrew's, I will be taking a sabbatical for two and a half summer months. Advent means "coming" or "arriving" in Latin. In our liturgical year, Advent is the beautiful time we set apart to prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas—the new birth of Christ into a weary world. For Episcopal clergy, a sabbatical time is also

meant to be a kind of preparation for a new birth. At the start of a sabbatical, we clergy get to ask ourselves, "What do I need for renewal and spiritual refreshment? Where does new life want to begin in me?" and then we are given a series of weeks for renewal, study, and a variety of experiments and experiences as we test out answers to those important questions. We hope to come back to ministry with a sense of how our renewed spirit can bring new life to our congregations and to us.

The word "sabbatical" comes from the same root word which gives us the word "sabbath"—the Biblical day of rest on the seventh day of the week. Sabbath is an ancient understanding of the sacred nature of rest, restoration, reflection, prayer, and worship. I'm looking forward to taking a deep dive into exercise, spiritual reflection, study, and research this summer.

If the pandemic stays at a low level, I'm eager to have my sabbatical adventure include a trip to London, Canterbury, and Salisbury. I'm a big Anglophile at heart. (No surprise there.) Two important mentors of mine died in this past year, so I want to lay flowers on Lee McGee's grave in New Haven, CT, and to re-read a literary classic Kelly Wise introduced to me when I was a senior in high school.

Reading is a core place of joy and refreshment for me, so other books—spiritual ones and literary

classics—will be a part of my sabbatical time, too. There will also be three weeks of regular lighthearted vacation time.

Lastly, I hope to do some research on two ancestors of mine who both chose religious vocations: a minister and a missionary. Both died long before I was born. My family is full of lawyers, teachers, doctors, engineers, and homemakers, so I'm eager to have some time to look into the lives of John and Berthae, each separated by hundreds of years from one another, each choosing to claim a life of religious leadership in their own day. I'm eager to see if I have some things in common with these two members of my family tree.

I'm looking forward to my sabbatical time of rest, adventure, contemplation, and fun. Some of these adventures will be pure enjoyment, others will need some work to bear fruit, or are solemn joys. I want to dig deep into all of them. I'll be prayerful that the summer holds rest, adventure, reflection, and fun for you and your families, too.

As we work our way out of the pandemic and other significant challenges of this year, it is so important for us to find rest and renewal in beaches, mountains, and garden paths—in reading, travel, and fun with family and friends. Blessings in it all until we are back together at our St. Andrew's picnic in September.



St. Andrew's Pilgrimage to England 2023

Discovering Our Anglican Roots in Cathedrals (and Pubs!)

IN THE SPIRIT OF CHAUCER and his Canterbury Tales, St. Andrew's will be taking a pilgrimage to England in the early summer of 2023. Our rector, the Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole, and the Rev. Margaret Schwarzer will be facilitating our tour. A seminarian classmate of Adrian's, the Very Rev. Dominic Barrington, Dean of St. James Cathedral in Chicago, will be assisting with the logistics "on the ground" and in the appointment of excellent local guides.

As Chaucer would expect, we will be engaging the history, the liturgy, and the fun England has to offer. We are setting our sites on Canterbury, London, and the North Country. Current itinerary includes two days in Canterbury while living on "the close" (cathedral grounds), exploring several great churches and historic landscapes of

the North (including Durham, York, and Lindisfarne), and enjoying a free day in London. Other elements of the trip include cream teas, great pubs, and opportunities to experience Evensong in ancient Anglican cathedrals.

Our 2023 pilgrimage will run from July 5 to July 17, 2023. We anticipate inviting between 20 and 25 pilgrims to join us. A rough cost will be between \$4,800 to \$5,000 per person including airfare, double rooms, all breakfasts, and some dinners. As we prepare for our journey, we will hold several informative meetings/ experiences to help us deepen our appreciation of our Anglican heritage and to get to know one another better.

Please contact the Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole at adrian@standrewswellesley.org if you are interested



The altar at Canterbury Cathedral, England







Photo: Peter K Burian, Wikimedia

in learning more about this pilgrimage.

No commitment is required at this time. We want to get a sense of how many of us might like to travel to England together next summer. We are anticipating a wonderful trip together.

Keep Connected

WHEREVER YOU GO THIS SUMMER you can always keep in touch with happenings around St. Andrew's by connecting with social media and attending worship online using the links from the website below.

 Worship Morning Prayers 8:30am Monday-Friday & Sunday 10am Join Us for Worship	 St. Andrew's Facebook Page Please follow us on Facebook. Go to Facebook	 "StAsWellesley" Instagram Posts Please follow us on Instagram. Go to Instagram
 "StAsWellesleyYouth" Instagram Posts Follow St. Andrew's youth on Instagram. Go to Instagram	 St. Andrew's YouTube Channel For additional interesting and fun videos. Go to YouTube	 St. Andrew's Zoom Meetings Sunday 9am Christian Learning Go to Zoom Links

This page is located at standrewswellesley.org/community-connections/

The Top Eight Lessons I Learned at St. Andrew's



The Rev. Maria (Mia) Kano

AS I PREPARE TO LEAVE St. Andrew's, I've been reflecting on all the lessons this place and these people have taught me. I have learned more than I can say—and I have been formed in more ways than I can realize! I especially wanted to focus on these eight lessons—lessons I am deeply grateful for and intend to carry with me throughout my priesthood.



Photo: Peter Lull

1. God has great timing

Ministry during the COVID pandemic was extremely challenging, in ways no church leader was prepared to face. Yet, I would find that just when I was at my most discouraged, God would come through for me to remind me of the “why” in all of this. Just when I'd be at my most disconnected, I'd have a life-giving phone call with one of you and you'd tell me the story of a beautiful moment of faith you shared with your child. Just when I'd be at my most exhausted, we would have an invigorating and innovative event that would buoy me back up again. Just when things felt fruitless, one of you would share about the impact of a word I had shared, or an effort I had made. These small moments made all of the difference in the darkest days of the pandemic.

2. Create space for children's wisdom

Whenever we gave children space to wonder, lead, or teach, their inherent wisdom, creativity, and insight would shine through in truly inspiring ways. Our new curriculum, Godly Play, has been particularly meaningful in that regard because it allows for open-ended wondering about the mysteries of our faith. Once the sense of “right” or “wrong” answers about God was removed, children's natural curiosity can flourish and surprise. After our Godly Play lesson on the mystery of Easter, parents marveled to me about the complexity of the spiritual concepts their children articulated. It reminded me how we often underestimate what children already know of faith and God, and how often we allow them to underestimate themselves. There are no special tricks to this revealing the wisdom of children; it only requires giving a child the space and the confidence that their voice will be heard and taken seriously. One

of the blessings of virtual COVID worship was the creative ways we included children and children's voices in the Sunday morning liturgy. From Bible skits to musical offerings to hand-drawn scripture illustrations to middle-school preachers to multi-lingual Pentecost proclaimers, the children of our parish helped us to hear and experience God in new ways. I am so proud of the ways Amanda Kern and Susan Jackson worked with me to incorporate children's leadership into our regular worship as we returned, and I hope that continues at St. Andrew's.

3. Keep approaching a community with the eyes of a newcomer

Another key lesson that was emphasized in a new way during COVID was the absolute necessity of continually looking around at our practices, space, and community rhythms from the perspective of new potential members. As more and more people found and assessed us through our website rather than risking an in-person visit first, the importance of keeping our photos, information pages, and calendar up to date only grew. This was reinforced every time we heard from a new person who found us through online worship or contacted us about information about our children's programs. Without the constant spiritual practices that call our attention to the experience of the newcomer, it can be so easy for us to forget that it is often the things that feel so welcoming and comforting to long-time members that are actually precisely what feel most exclusive to someone new!

4. Chaos is holy, too

In a chaotic and stressful world, silence and calm can feel deeply holy and precious. St. Andrew's children and youth, however, reminded me that chaos can be

sacred, too! A noisy, energetic room of gleeful shouts can express our spirituality just as surely as silence and candlelight. I have learned this can be especially true for children, whose lives are often so structured and controlled by adults. A chaotic classroom may feel stressful to the adult in charge, but when one looks closer, one can see freedom and joy on the faces of the children—a chance to express without external obligation or expectation. Removing expectations of perfection, control, and even excellence, can make room for the Holy Spirit. Messiness is beautiful!

5. Prioritize what makes church a different place than the rest of people's lives

Even as we feel increasing pressure to conform to the other institutions and activities in people's lives, church must offer us something that no other place can. As a youth minister especially, I have learned to emphasize what about our children and youth programming stands in contrast to the rest of their days. It has been particularly important to downplay competition as the primary way to bond or motivate children in church activities. Whether through grades, video games, or sports, competition defines so much of the way children interact with each other and through which they assess their own self-worth. Instead, I have learned to adapt our games and activities to be collaborative, emphasizing the skills of working together toward a shared goal. In this, children practice Gospel values of community-building and mutual support. You can feel the tangible relief from young people when they learn this is a space where they can be free from being compared and evaluated. In this place, kindness, and vulnerability matter more than appearance, intelligence, or even focus. The last few years, we've worked hard to restructure childrens' online and in-person space and time to



Photo: Mia Kano

feel less like school and more like, well, church, and the way we hope church can be caring, loving, and focused on the other.

6. Appreciation is everything

St. Andrew's parishioners, staff, and clergy excel in expressing their appreciation. Your gratitude has been abundant, freely given, and, most importantly, genuine. Vitally, your appreciation often included understanding and compassion for the challenges that your fellow parents, lay leaders, staff, and clergy faced. Your gratitude gave me energy and confidence in difficult moments. More than that, so much of the faith and spiritual experiences you have shared with me have been grounded in deep gratitude to God and God's blessings in your life. For so many of you, gratitude is your primary spiritual practice. How powerful that has been to learn from and experience!

7. You can never guess what has been a success until much later

It's the line from the sermon that I almost cut that captured someone's imagination. It's the event with just six attendees that helped someone on their faith journey. It's the confirmation class where everyone seemed bored that ended up sparking a teen's own prayer practice.

Like the parable of the farmer from Mark 4:26, the seeds of the Kingdom of God are planted, sprout, and grow in ways we can't fathom.

8. There's no place like St. Andrew's

This is a lesson I will continue to learn throughout my priesthood, I'm sure. The generosity of St. Andrew's parishioners, the brilliance of its youth, and the skill of its lay leadership are unparalleled. I hope that this parish continues to live into the uniqueness of its gifts and its special vocation in the world.



Photo: Mia Kano

Parishioner Reflections

FOLLOWING ARE REFLECTIONS from our fellow parishioners on taking faith with us during summer vacations. Their stories are a testament that spiritual renewal can take many forms, in some

instances they can be intentional, and at other times simply getaways with families and friends. Underpinning all of them is a pursuit for a deeper, more spiritual connection to God and our faith.

Taking Faith with Us on Summer Travels



Julie Ross

WHEN I WAS ASKED to write a piece on “taking faith with us on summer travels,” Door County, Wisconsin, immediately came to mind. My husband, Mason, and I live in Milwaukee and joined

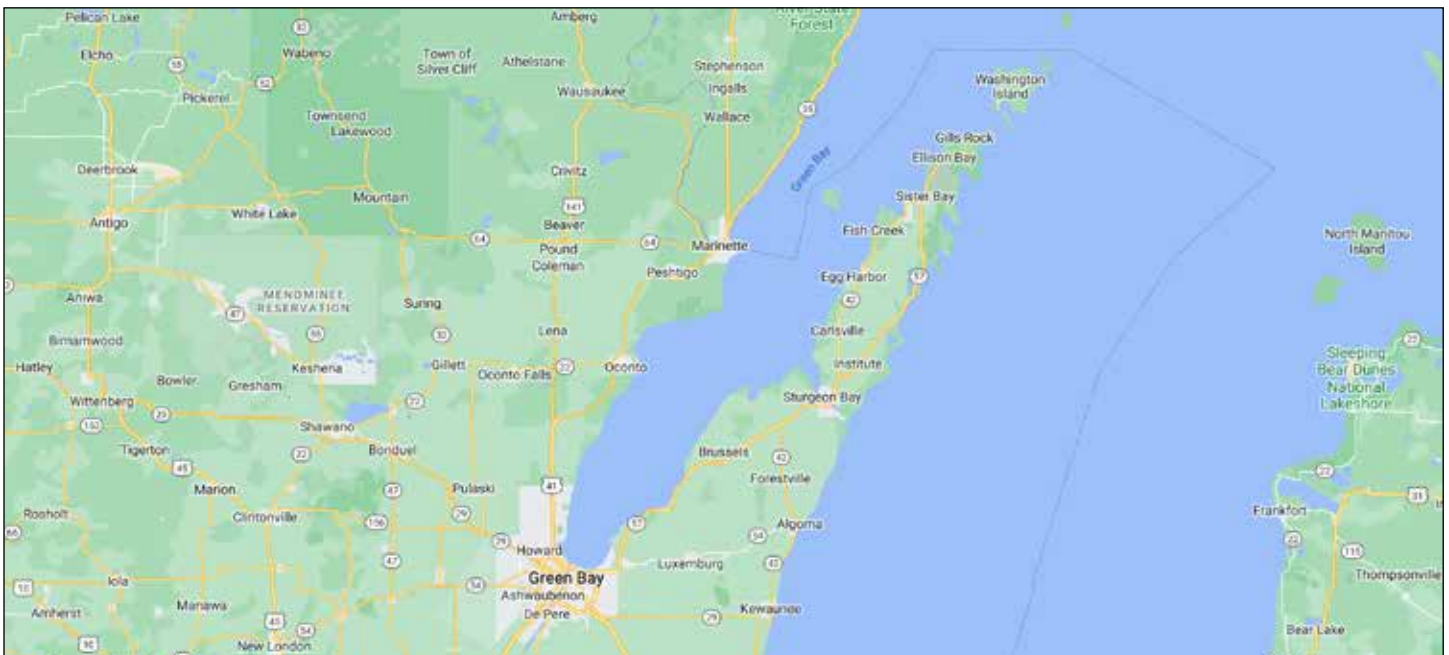
St. Andrew’s two years ago via Zoom—a true gift of COVID, if that can be said. Three hours north of Milwaukee is the peninsula of Door County, where we have had a summer home for about twenty years. When I cross the bridge and enter Door County, a peace comes over me. I begin to totally relax. I call it “Doorcolespy.” Our house overlooks Green Bay. We are about 70 feet from the water. The view is spectacular, the air is crisp and clear. It is to me God’s country.

The real treat, besides the beauty of the land and being on the water, is Hidden Acres Farm, which is across the street. It was developed by our neighbor to the north. Google it! The Farm has a community garden, about as close to a blue zone as possible. It is

organic. Any neighbors can work on the 26 garden plots and harvest the produce. We often have dinners together at a farm kitchen on the property using some of the produce from the garden. I’ve meet people who have lived nearby and not known, and probably would never have met, but the Farm has brought us together.

We have traveled many places, but Door County is right up there for places I cherish. In a spiritual way it is peaceful, it is beautiful, it is a wonderful community. The owners of the Farm, the Rehbergers, have reached out to everyone and shown a true Christian way of life in their kindness and generosity.

Our country is blessed with many places similar to Door County, earthy slices of heaven.



Google Maps

Door County, Wisconsin is on a peninsula northeast of Green Bay



Summer Vacation



Pam Alexander

MY IDEA of summer vacation completely changed for me with COVID. We have always traveled during summer vacations and hope to again, but in the last two years, that was not possible. As much as I missed travel, I'm not saying that it was necessarily bad for me to have to redefine "vacation." With no place to go and with many fewer social interactions (except perhaps outside), I had to learn to slow down

and to pay more attention to God's creation as it exists right in front of me. And I guess that's the point of Sabbath.

We started to hike much more in the state parks, public lands, and reservations nearby. When walking on uneven ground I had to focus on navigating those rocks or tree roots that were right in front of me, just like God asks me to attend to the present moment instead of the future or the past. I took up gardening and found that I was always calmer after a stressful day at work when weeding, planting bulbs, or just lingering in the garden. Because I am by nature somewhat introverted, digging in the garden allowed me to go inward and to meditate; having the trowel in my hand kept me grounded and prevented meditation from morphing into obsession or worry. I put up bird feeders in our backyard that we could then view from the countertop while preparing food in our kitchen. In

walking outdoors, I began to pay more attention to bird calls and signed up for Cornell University's app for recognizing bird sounds. I began to notice how one hummingbird typically scared away the other hummingbirds from "its" personal feeder. I also observed how the hummingbirds seemed to develop personal relationships with us in that they were readily present when we were alone with them on the patio but disappeared when we had company.

Sitting outside while watching church services online was especially moving. I would hear about God's grace in the liturgy and sermon and then actually witness God's opulence and graciousness in real time with all the colors, bird sounds, breeze in my face, and the smell of the pine trees in our backyard. My hope for the future is to retain this focus on God's world whether or not I am on vacation. I have felt grateful for this crash course given me by the pandemic.

“Hail Mary”

Photo: Wolfgang Moroder, *Virgo*, a sculpture by Josef Moroder-Lusenbergr.



Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou
amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of
thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of
God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of
our death. *Amen.*



Betsy Millane

PICTURE THIS: Two little girls, Betsy and Mindy, dressed up, returning home from a shopping excursion with their mother. They are 50 miles from home and hurrying because the car has to be back to their father, who has a work appointment to get to.

The car develops a flat tire. Dismayed, the mother gets out of the car, surveys the flat tire, and searches her mind for options. She opens the trunk, but the tire jack and spare tire are beyond her ability to remedy the situation.

She opens the back door, where the two little girls sit, waiting.

“Betsy, Mindy, I need for you to get on your knees and pray that someone will pull over and help us. Daddy needs the car back and I don’t know what else to do.”

Having just completed a year of Catholic religious instruction, the elder of the two, Betsy, instructs her little sister to close her eyes, fold her hands, and repeat the prayers after her: The “Our Father” (The Lord’s Prayer) and the “Hail Mary.” If you were to look through the back window you would see two little girls, heads bowed in prayer, praying for deliverance but without any expectation of it. They are simply doing what their mother told them to do.

Moments later, a car pulls over and a capable-looking man gets out. He goes to work on the flat tire

and before you know it, they are back on the road.

From the front seat, the mother chortles, “You did it, girls! God sent a helper to us! Your prayers to Jesus did it!”

We sat back in bewilderment, happy she was happy, pleased at the apparent power of prayer. Jesus could be called and He Himself could rescue you! Betsy wished she’d gotten a better look at the man but had been instructed to stay in the car and out of his way. He might have been Jesus and she wanted to know what he looked like!

Years go by. Betsy is on a train traveling from Austria to Greece, backpacking through Europe with a friend. At the border of Yugoslavia, her passport, as is everyone else’s, is taken away. Armed soldiers patrol the train platform, growling dogs sniff the under carriage of the train, and mirrors are employed to find anyone trying to escape.

At the border of Greece, there is a hold up. Everyone but Betsy has had their passport returned. She is alarmed, frightened of being imprisoned in a Communist country for no discernible reason. Had someone planted something illegal in her luggage?

A man who had occupied her compartment for most of the journey appears in the doorway and summons her down the corridor. She follows him, fear mounting.

“Hail Mary, full of Grace,” she says under her breath.

In another compartment, she faces three grim-faced officials. Her passport is before them. They speak to her in an unknown Eastern Slavic language, she responds in English. Finally, the man who has accompanied her to the table stares at the pouch where she carries her money—traveler’s checks and American bills. She opens the pouch and takes out a \$50 bill. He nods, she sets it on

the table, her passport is returned. The train starts up, the border is crossed. Betsy never sees the man who helped her to understand she needed to bribe the officials to continue into Greece. Sitting in her seat, flushed with relief, Betsy feels she might have been visited by Jesus again.

Years later Betsy would read a book: *Ernest Shackleton's South: The Endurance Expedition* about Shackleton and his efforts to rescue his crew marooned on Elephant Island near Antarctica after their ship was crushed in the ice pack. Shackleton

and a crew of two men set out in a dinghy to a whaling port on South Georgia Island to summon help. They survive a hurricane but have washed up on the wrong side of the island. Their boat is no longer seaworthy; they must cross a mountain range to get to the whaling station. They set off, encountering seemingly insurmountable challenge after challenge. Finally, the mountain summited, the men note the miracle of their deliverance and congratulate each other. Notable: All three of them swear there had been another man among them, making the

treacherous climb and descent with them. They credit Providence for their survival, and I wonder: was Jesus there beside them?

Faith in the journey was the brief for this article, but this writer would like to think that faith and prayer sometimes summon the actual form of Jesus. I'd like to imagine that, among the miracles he performs remotely, He likes to get his hands dirty, rescuing little girls and their mother; rescuing a bewildered traveler; and even the explorer, Ernest Shackleton.

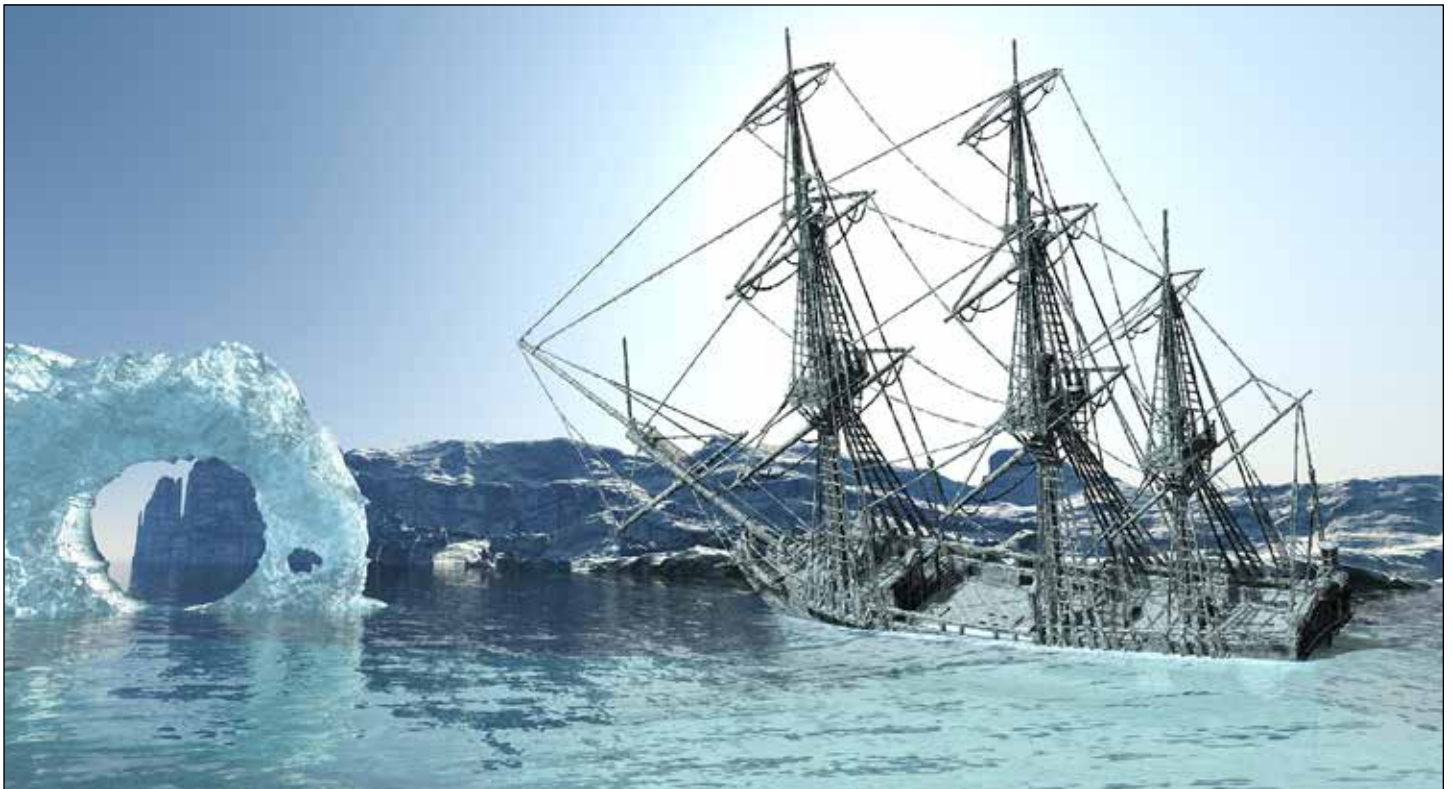


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Photo: Peter B. Lull

THE CALL

Congratulations to the Class of 2022

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