

Lent 2016

“The mystery of Providence is the mystery of God’s creative, dynamic involvement with and in the moments of our lives and history.”
Marie McCarthy, SP

Looking out at mountains misted in their blue haze, I can feel the mystery of Providence humming a steady rhythm through all things breathing, softly drum-beating with the swaying of every tree, every groaning, stretching root deep in the earth. Wonder and a sense of reverence fill me as I contemplate, perhaps one of the finest acts of God’s creative, dynamic involvement with me, with all of us. What speaks the mystery of Providence more explicitly than creation itself—the very breath of Providence in all creativity and serendipity?

Isaiah, in today’s first reading, speaks of God making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds...waters in the wilderness to “give my chosen people to drink.” These people will sing my praises, says God. And so the challenge I feel is to keep dancing our song, drum-humming our breath; our voices must be that of the silenced resurrected and our tears the holy watering of the land and hearts and souls.

John’s gospel speaks of the adulterous woman, who everyone wants to stone. Jesus lets everyone gather, spew their condemnations, ready themselves for the stoning, while he calmly scribbles in the dust. Some theologians say Jesus was writing names of those who had used this woman; others think Jesus was writing the sins of the gathered. I like to think that Jesus was simply doodling in the created earth, playing in the dirt, maybe drawing a quick mandala to give him time to center himself anew, to give the gathered accusers time to reassess their actions. Perhaps he was giving everyone a second chance. Whatever he was doing, perhaps we can learn a lesson: “The mystery of Providence,[of love, of creativity, of birthing] is the great mystery of God’s creative, dynamic involvement...in the moments of our lives and our history.” Surely, the accused woman experienced this in her bones ...surely Isaiah trusted this as he prophesied to the people...surely Jesus drum-hummed it in his very breath. How do we, as Providence women and men, continue to birth this reality everyday? Doodle in the dirt...see what emerges.

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Women of Providence
in Collaboration*