

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

TREE OF LIFE

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them. I will be like the dew for Israel: he shall blossom like the lily; He shall strike root like the Lebanon cedar and put forth his shoots. His splendor shall be like the olive tree and his fragrance like the Lebanon cedar. Again they shall dwell in his shade and raise grain; they shall blossom like the vine and his fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

HOSEA 14:4-7

Reflection

The imagery in the first reading from Hosea and Psalm 51 (**today's responsorial psalm**) is like a gentle rain falling softly within my soul-space. It is so easy to lose our way with the daily demands of our lives. These readings remind us, in beautiful symbolic language, what it is like to be

grounded in the Lord our God. We are being invited to take in these images and words and allow them to nurture and strengthen us for the trials and tribulations of life. Below is my own heart-response to these images and words.

Tree of Life

O Tree of Life, your roots run deep and wide within me. May the splendor of your word and life be the nutrients within the soil of my soul that enable me to bear the fruit you ask of me.

May the Shade of your Being be an oasis where I encounter you and your indwelling presence. May my life, in turn, be like a shade tree in the midst of the deserts of life, a place of refuge for those seeking respite from the blistering heat sometimes experienced in daily life.

May the Dew of your Being be the moist, refreshing Spirit of Renewal within me. May I, in turn, be like a gentle mist that calms and soothes when life becomes hot and burdensome like the Sahara sun.

May the Joyful Spirit of your countenance find a home in me, and may my life give testament to the faith, hope, love, and joy I have in you.



Sequoia National Park
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- How do the beautiful images in the first reading from Hosea and Psalm 51 speak to you? Is there a certain phrase or image that sparks a new insight about your own relationship with the Beloved? Allow your imagination to take you on an inward journey where the Holy Spirit gives you insight into your own pilgrimage in life.
 - What words or phrases from Psalm 51 (**Responsorial Psalm for today**) speak to you? Why is this? How do you experience a "clean heart within you?" Spend a few minutes of quiet and allow Spirit Wisdom to inform you.
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For Prayer

*O God who grants us the grace we need to live each day,
may we be a safe oasis for those feeling uprooted
and far from your life-giving presence.
May we be the conduits for our brothers and sisters
in need of an encounter with you – our Beloved.
Amen.*

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