

November 1, 2024

# Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

## UNFOLDING SURRENDER

By Julie Mussché

### A Quote

*"There are some many [leaves]. Piles of them ... More saints than you could ever dream of. Each one singular .... yellow, red, orange, parchment ... They are so trusting -- letting go completely ...*

*"These gentle flowers remind me that we surrender to no one finally but our own soul, to the essence of ourselves, which is hidden in God. Sweet and wild is the experience of surrender. There is nothing more intimate."*

**GUNILLA NORRIS, JOURNEYING IN PLACE**

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### Reflection

Late at night, as I sit pondering the departing day, I can hear the leaves falling from the fig tree in my backyard. The sound is a mere whisper as each leaf bounces through the branches until it quietly touches the ground. Lately, the frequency of leaves falling is accelerating, signaling that Autumn has arrived.

I love this season. To begin with, it is sensually stunning with contrasting colors and outlining shadows, cooling temperatures and cerulean blue skies. The atmosphere looks and feels expansive and the smell of vegetation burnt by the summer sun is intoxicating. It is a time of gathering, sharing, remembering, table fellowship, gratitude, decorating the house and lingering. Typically, for my household, it is a time of travel and visiting family.

Well, this year is definitely going to be different. I don't know about you, but I find the whole circumstance rather perplexing as well as poignant. There seems to be a whole lot of spiritual wrestling going on, at least with folks I speak with. The idea of surrendering, as intimated by Gunilla Norris above, seems in some ways like looking through "Alice's looking glass." Between the upcoming election, our nation's discord, and the uncertainty and tensions of global conflicts and violence, finding spiritual solace, balance and release can seem untenable.

Perhaps one entry way to reaching a place of surrender is by being present to the unfolding experience in relation to self as well as others. Touching base with mind, body and spirit on a regular basis as well as checking in with community offers a means to surface and embrace the mish-mosh of the present reality.

With so much going on, prayer life may be stretched and illusive. Perhaps try something wild and adventurous for a change of pace. Check out "Some Considerations" below for some ideas. Above all, be kind to yourself and if possible, allow yourself moments of idle nothingness where perhaps you just listen to the leaves bravely releasing into the unknown.

A blessing on this All Saints Day!

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Backyard Fall Foliage

Photo by Julie Mussché

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## Some Considerations

- Journal all the blessings in your life and dance a dance of celebration.
  - Write a letter of complaint to God in the Job-like tradition.
  - Conduct a soul refresher where you check in with your spirit and with God to see what's up and how things are going. Perhaps sketch out or paint the state of your soul and share it with God.
  - A walking meditation with a specific centering prayer or rosary.
  - Coordinate a Zoom scripture reflection -- 30-40 minutes, one passage reading, quiet reflection and short sharing.
  - How about a mindful cooking session exploring the qualities of ingredients and expressing gratitude for each part of the meal?
  - Perhaps a ritual mourning of the changes that have occurred, or remembering the suffering and losses experienced around the world.
  - Take a day to "disconnect" from the internet and media and just be with God.
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## For Prayer

### ***A Psalm of Lament for This Time***

*The tumult of our time makes  
finding that peace that surpasses  
all understanding  
an arduous journey;*

*If I speak loudly  
will you hear the trembling in my voice  
weighted down with grief and fear  
a witness to unfettered malice and duplicity?*

*My heart is shattered, my soul shaken  
humbly before you I stand  
my face covered in awe  
awaiting your touch;*

*Of Grace, of peace  
of the refreshing power of your love  
to inspire, to energize my spirit  
to carry on, to go further;*

*To that place where I am called,  
to be Your presence in this wilderness of chaos,  
to carry Your light  
of mercy, compassion, justice, and love.*

*Thank you, Beloved One  
for listening to my lament  
and for being ready to respond  
You are my rock, my salvation.*

*Amen.*

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