

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

I PRAISE YOU FOR I AM WONDERFULLY MADE

By Sr. Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Gospel

*O LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and when I stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,
with all my ways you are familiar.*

I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

*Truly you have formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works.*

*My soul also you knew full well;
nor was my frame unknown to you
When I was made in secret,*

when I was fashioned in the depths of the earth.

PSALM 139: 1b-3, 13-14ab, 14c-15

Reflection

This feast of the birth of John the Baptist was established very early in the Christian church's history, at about the same time as the feast of Christmas. The old customs that centered around the summer solstice became ways to recognize and honor John. The Northern Hemisphere receives more daylight than any other day of the year on the summer solstice. This day marks the start of astronomical summer, when days start to become shorter and nights longer.

In some parts of the world, "St. John's fires" are burned and people stay up all night into the day to tend the flames. In Poland, wreaths with lighted candles are tossed into streams to float downriver. The Koran calls John a great prophet so in Morocco, Muslims light fires to celebrate his birth. Doors, automobiles and buses are decorated with green birch twigs. In Lithuania a cheese sweetened with honey is prepared in a round shape to resemble the sun. The honey is a reminder of one of the foods John ate in the desert.



Image by Greg Rakozy

For Pondering

Day and night, light and darkness are integral elements in any birth, in any coming to life. They are complements of being “wonderfully made” through the creative, energetic desire of God.

- In what ways do I recognize this in my daily life?
 - In what ways do I identify this in the diversity of creation?
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For Prayer

Learning Life's Lessons

*Dear God
let my heart
grasp
the profound wisdom
with which You created
the world.
Help me understand
that life's difficulties
are in fact her opportunities;
life's endings
are also her beginnings;
life's disappointments
are her finest teachers.*

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