



Center for Spiritual Development

# *Daily Reflections*

Image by Christine Sponchia

## **UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES**

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

### **An Excerpt from Today's First Reading**

*Brothers and Sisters: We, though many, are one Body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*

**ROMANS 12:5-8**

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### **Reflection**

During this week I am using the word AUTUMN as an acronym to reflect on each day's readings. For today, the word is UNDERSTANDING. For context, the word from yesterday's reading is included, as well as the words for the rest of the week.

## **AUTUMN**

A: Awe

**U: Understanding**

T: Trust

U: Underneath

M: Mighty

N: Nature

This first reading from Romans is a poignant one because it has a deep and abiding message to each of us. We are each called to prayerfully discern the gifts we've been given and this requires humility, courage, and acceptance. It's also helpful to invite others to reflect with us on how they experience our gifts.

In September, I was a part of a one-day Initial Formation Team retreat where five of us, who are members of this Team, reflected with one another on the gifts we bring to this ministry of initial formation. What I experienced was "awe" – the word from yesterday's reflection – as well as "understanding," the word for today. I was struck by the depth and breadth of insights shared in both the naming of the gifts we see in ourselves, as well as the gifts we see in one another.

If you have not done this type of reflection, invite a few of your friends to share in a similar manner. In doing so, you understand and recognize and give thanks to God for what you have been given as gifts, and your ability to abundantly share these gifts with others.

### ***Understanding***

*With humility, let us name and accept the gifts we've been given; may we not look at others and compare gifts as if one is better than the other. If God has given these gifts, then there is no hierarchy to the gifts we've been given.*

*With courage, may we till the soil within us, understanding how best to use our gifts for the Reign of God. Let us not shy away from utilizing all that has been given to us no matter how inconvenient or unsure we might feel within ourselves.*

*With understanding, let us seek out the gifts of others, creating space and time for the unleashing of God's abundance upon ourselves and others.*

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Vermont  
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

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### For Pondering

- Create a quiet space within yourself and gently name the gifts you've been given. How freely, how often, do you share these gifts? Perhaps today is a day to share, with all humility, the gifts you've been given.
  - As you encounter others today, pause and reflect on the gifts you see in them. Look for an opportunity to share what you see in them because they might not realize the gifts they possess.
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### For Prayer

*O God who understands us more than we will ever understand ourselves,  
may we cultivate the gifts we've been given in Your name;  
sharing abundantly to continue to build up the Body of Christ.  
Amen.*

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