

July 29, 2025

Daily Reflections



NORTH TO ALASKA

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

“Any thorough experience of sacred space will have to follow this deliberate pattern of mystery, demystification and the subsequent reawakening of wonder. Only then will we grasp the full significance of the genius loci, the spirit of the place where God is met.”

BELDEN C. LANE, LANDSCAPES OF THE SACRED: GEOGRAPHY AND NARRATIVE IN AMERICAN SPIRITUALITY

Reflection

Seven years ago, friends and I met up in Alaska to go land touring and cruising from Seward through the Inside Passage to Vancouver. We started the five-day land portion of the journey in Fairbanks and traveled to Denali, where we explored the National Park and surroundings. From there we headed to Anchorage and Seward to embark on the cruise through the Inside Passage.

The landscape is wildly beautiful and we saw and experienced so much in the five days, we looked forward to a restful sea day as we made our way south by water.

After a day of moving slowly through waters colored milky turquoise by glacial till and surrounded by ice-sculpted horizons, we landed at Haines to begin a day of adventure. We had booked a wilderness tour which included a boat ride through a fjord to Glacier Point. We viewed bald eagles perched on treetops along the way. From there, we took a dirt road through the forest, where we would outfit to walk a quarter mile to get a canoe and paddle and motor on a lake to view Davidson Glacier. What were we thinking?

The road to the canoe was overgrown and rocky, and since we had changed out our own shoes for rain boots, the walk to the canoes was a bit arduous. Thankfully it was short and before we knew it, we were boarding our transport to the glacier. Now, while I love floating on a canoe, I had tipped enough of them so that I boarded our boat gingerly. Settled in, we began gliding across the morainal lake and soaked in the stunning forested mountains. We traveled a bit and then arrived at our destination where the canoes were anchored, and we carefully got out of the of the boats and waded to land to walk closer to the glacier.

The beach was composed of sand and pebbles, so the trek was ponderous. I ended up at the back of our group of adventurers, probably about a dozen or so souls. One of the guides remained with me, probably because I was old enough to be his grandmother. We had a rich conversation, and I learned he was a student originally from Southern California who served as a tour guide every summer. He offered a picture of his life during the season, which often included groups of guides living “off the grid” in cabins in the local forests. The dialogue and mutual explorations carried us to our destination. We viewed the glacier, obviously receding, and enjoyed just being in such a place of wonder, together in communion with other explorers of God’s great gift of creation.



Alaska

Photo by Julie Mussché

For Pondering

- What sacred wonders have you encountered in the quest for recreation and adventure?
- How have you encountered God in these moments?

For Prayer

*Thank you, God,
for the joys of recreation and adventure.
Thank you for the quiet moments of beauty and natural wonders,
of accidental encounters and communion with strangers.
Blessed are the simple joys of life.*

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