



belly of the whale
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION & RETREAT MINISTRIES



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march 2016

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Spouting Off



Dear friends,

The 'Epiphany Lights' have finally come down and our purple Lenten lights shine at each of the doorways. The days lengthen as we prepare our hearts for the sacred events of Holy Week and the celebration of life over death, love over hate and compassion over anger. May this season of purple lights and holy preparation fill you with spiritual strength and renewal as Easter day draws near.

In the light of Christ,

Pastor Sharon, Director

Contemplate This: Snow Globe Moments

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalm 46:10



The Christmas decorations have been put back in their boxes and hauled off to the basement. However, I always leave one nativity scene out - a little reminder that Emmanuel, God-with-us, dwells among us all year long.

This year, I decided to leave a snow globe out as well. I love the playful beauty of a snow globe - turn it upside down, shake it all about and the scene disappears amidst a flurry of swirling snow. When you put the snow globe down and let it sit still for a moment, the snow settles and the scene at the center becomes clear again.

My life is a lot like a snow globe. When I am turned upside down and shaken all about, it is hard to see clearly what is right before my eyes. However, when I sit still and let the flurries settle, I see God's presence at the center of my life far more clearly. I call these blessed moments of stillness my "snow globe moments." They need not be lengthy. They can be as simple as saying a quick prayer while waiting in line or taking a slow, deep breath while sitting at a red light. The challenge for me is remembering to set the snow globe down.

May you be blessed with "snow globe moments" when you can be still, let the flurries settle and see God more clearly at the center of it all.



SDFAQs

Is there a professional organization for Spiritual Directors?

Spiritual Director's International is a global organization that has provided ethical guidelines, ongoing training, and professional support to its members for over 25 years (sdiworld.org). In addition, the **Fellowship of United Methodist Spiritual Director's & Retreat Leaders** (also known as "Hearts on Fire") is a professional organization for spiritual directors within the United Methodist connection (fumsdrl.org). Both groups also offer resources for those seeking a spiritual director or who are interested in learning more about spiritual direction.



Retreat Suggestions



**Praying with Mandalas: An Invitation to
Contemplative Prayer through Coloring**

**Jesuit Retreat House, Parma, Ohio
April 18, 2016 7-9:00 pm \$20**



You are warmly invited to come and learn a simple, hands-on method of prayer that draws on the increasingly popular practice of coloring for all ages. We will be using modern mandala designs created specifically for use with the traditional contemplative practices of centering prayer, lectio divina and intercessory prayer. Join us for this relaxing evening of spiritual rest and renewal. All supplies will be provided. Contact the Jesuit Retreat House to register at jrh-cleveland.org.

Prayer for the Season

(Excerpts from *Listening to Winter* by Macrina Wiederkehr)

I am listening.

I am listening to the kind permission of the season
to rest more often
to reflect more deeply
to pray without words.

I am listening to the sacrament of non-doing.

I am listening.

I am listening to snowflakes flying through the air,
to the cold winds that often blow out there,
to bare trees, so lovely in their emptiness,
to one leaf that never did let go.

I am listening.

I am listening to winter
handing over spring.
I am listening to the poetry of winter.

I am listening.



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