

April 15th 2022, Offering # 92 - THE FINAL ISSUE.

Today's issue is a collection of all of the submissions I have received and not included – I hope you enjoy the variety as much as I have.

Until we meet again!

I am happy with how the weekly offerings grew, from one page to eight or more. I have been blessed by your encouragement, your enthusiasm, your questions and your loyalty.

***Gratitude* is an emotion
that reflects our *deep appreciation*
for what we value,
what brings meaning to our lives,
and what makes us
feel connected to ourselves and others.**

Brené Brown

I am so grateful for my proofreaders, Sharon Mortimore and Kay Snedden, who so kindly and diligently smoothed out the rough edges of the content of the "Offering". I will always smile when I see commas, quotation marks, and periods - oh dear, what is the rule of order. These Vikings of spelling and punctuation can get off their steeds and kick up their heels for a job very well done. I thank you.

And Suzanne, my friend, the Zany Gardener turned "Unconventional County Cook." The amount of fun and feistiness you exploded onto the pages week after week was truly remarkable. You inspired and motivated all of us to dig in our gardens. Even I was checking my garden every day for nasty bugs and the reward of beautiful tomatoes. You are one of the good ones, Suzanne; you give and give, right from the heart. Thank you.

To Fr. Brad who regularly encouraged and supported me. Thank you for unpacking my theological questions and mysteries.

To Sandra Kennerley who sent out the “Offering” every Friday morning right on time in spite of computer glitches. To the readers at St. Thomas’ Church and other local churches, thank you.

To my readers far and wide, you have inspired and engaged me. I am grateful and blessed by the incredible support you have given me. Thank you for “leaning in” on so many topics.

As Brené Brown says, “There is a difference between feeling contentment and feeling tranquil. With contentment, we often have the sense of having completed something: with tranquility, we relish the feeling of doing nothing.”

I am content with the journey of the “Offering”. And now I am looking forward to some tranquil time, on our farm, Waldorf Farm, with its beautiful path through the woods for walking and biking. Can’t wait to spend time exploring with our ten grandchildren.

Come and walk with me, in prayer or virtually – I am not ready to be without you. Please feel free to contact me kateannfollwell@gmail.com - have a chat let me know how you are doing and how God is inspiring you.

With blessings and affection, Deacon Kate Ann

For those of you who are looking for daily inspiration, check out these free sites

Norval United Church – My Daily Minute
Society of Saint John the Evangelist
New Pilgrim Path
The PLOUGH Daily Dig

When the “Offering” began on April 15th 2020. This was the only item featured as support through our pandemic. This poem was written in 1869 by Kathleen O’Mara. Reprinted during Spanish flu Pandemic, 1919

submitted by Catherine Hall

**And people stayed at home,
And read books,
And listened.
And they rested,
And did exercises,
And made art and played.
And learned new ways of being,
And stopped and listened
More deeply.
Someone meditated, someone prayed,
Someone met their shadow.
And people began to think differently,
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways,
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal.
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves,
They grieved for the dead,
And made new choices,
And dreamed of new visions,
And created new ways of living,
And completely healed the earth,
Just as they were healed.**

A little Boy wanted to meet God - Submitted by Sharon Mortimore

A little a boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato chips and a 6 pack of root beer and started his journey.

When he had gone about 3 blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some chips. He gratefully accepted and smiled at him.

His smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, the old gentleman smiled at him. The boy was delighted. They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man and gave him a hug. And, the old man gave him his biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied "I ate potato chips in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, God is much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime! Embrace all equally! We continue to be challenged to do good and to trust God. As we turn to God, asking him to show his face to us and dwell within us, he will gently release us from the anxiety and cares that weigh us down. All we have to do is ask. As we embrace God's peace, and trust that he will meet us with his love and blessings in every area of our lives.

Have lunch with God Bring potato chips *Author unknown*

We Fear Silence *Richard J. Foster*

The tongue is our most powerful weapon of manipulation. A frantic stream of words flows from us because we are in a constant process of adjusting our public image. We fear so deeply what we think other people see in us that we talk in order to straighten out their understanding. If I have done some wrong thing (or even some right thing that I think you may misunderstand) and discover that you know about it, I will be very tempted to help you understand my action.

Silence is one of the deepest disciplines of the spirit simply because it puts the stopper on all self-justification. One of the fruits of silence is the freedom to let God be our justifier. We don't need to straighten others out.

NAZI GRAFFITI IN CLASSROOM DISAPPEARED

submitted with thanks to Anne Bunnett

Written by Peter Murphy, Oakville

At one point in my 45 year career teaching high school, I found that many of the students in my English as a second language class were from families who had emigrated from Eastern Europe.

I noticed as I erased the boards each day, very small swastikas drawn in the corner of the slate.

One morning, I addressed the issue with the students.

The offending drawings continued to show up.

I decided to reserve a bus and take the entire class to the Holocaust education Center at 466 Bathurst St. in Toronto, knowing the center staff could furnish a lesson far better than anything I could provide the students.

On the ride to the center, the students were chatting and eating their lunch, pleased to have a break from the classroom.

As we made our way down a few steps into the gloomy chambers of the center, a descent which would have terrified the real victims, they heard presentations about the horrific pictures, videos, posters and artifacts in glass cases, which included the actual uniforms prisoners were forced to wear.

At the end of the tour, a survivor of the atrocity addressed them and rolled up his sleeve to show the identifying tattoo numbers the Nazis had burned into his arm.

On the ride back to the school the bus was eerily quiet.

No more swastikas showed up in the classroom.

Johnny Gave Blood One Minute Message GARY CARVER

**There is a story about a little boy who was told by his doctor
that he could save his sister's life by giving her blood.
The six-year-old girl was near death, and her only chance
of recovering was a blood transfusion from someone
who had previously conquered the illness.
Since the two children had the same rare blood type,
the boy was the ideal donor.**

**"Johnny, would you like to give
your blood for Mary? "The doctor asked.
The boy hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble.
Then he smiled, "Sure, doctor, I'll give my blood for my sister."**

**Soon the two children were wheeled
into the operating room.
Mary pale and thin and Johnny,
robust and the picture of health.
Neither spoke but when their eyes met Johnny grinned.**

**As his blood siphoned into Mary's veins,
one could almost see new life
coming into her tired body.
The ordeal was almost over
when Johnny's little voice broke the silence.
"Say, doctor, when do I die?"**

**It was only then that the doctor realized that little Johnny actually thought he
was giving his blood to his sister, he was giving up his life.**

*The following is taken from a sermon by Br. Curtis Almquist ...
Society of Saint John 'the Evangelist...*

“Hallelujah” is a Hebrew word that means “Praise the Lord.” The word does not appear in the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. The word “Hallelujah” does not appear anywhere in the New Testament except in the last book. In one chapter of the Revelation to John it’s like the last word.

You might find it inviting to say “Hallelujah” under your breath throughout the day as you take in life, and as you take on life. Notice the panoply of spring buds on the trees, look at the brave little flowers peeping up from the cold earth, listen to the birds singing their solos; savor the fragrances and aromas of creation; revere what God has created in human life – all of us so different from one another – in age, in skin color, in gender, in abilities and vocations and preferences of every kind – all of us so different, and yet so much the same. Saying “Hallelujah” under your breath a myriad of times throughout the day is claiming your voice and claiming your part in what God is up to which, if you stand back and take it in, and step up to take it on, is wonderful, is absolutely amazing, this gift of life. Who could have imagined what God has imagined? Hallelujah.”

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There were times when I (KA) felt like Mac in the book “The Shack”, trying to understand the love of God. “Why do you love me when I keep messing up?” God says, “I already know what you will do and what choices you will make. I know it will take you 47 situations and events before you will actually hear me – that is before you will change. When you don’t hear me the first time. I am not frustrated or disappointed, I’m thrilled, only 46 more times to go.

“Practice, Patience and Perseverance.”

“Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday and forever”

“Aha” Moments An Obituary printed in the London Times

Submitted with thanks to Liz Reid

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, COMMON SENSE who has been with us for many years.

No one knows for sure how old COMMON SENSE was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- **Knowing when to come in out of the rain**
- **Why the early bird gets the worm**
- **Life isn't always fair**
- **Maybe it was my fault.**

COMMON SENSE lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but over bearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

And COMMON SENSE lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

COMMONSENSE lost the will to live as churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

COMMON SENSE took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault. COMMON SENSE finally gave up the world to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little on her lap, and was promptly awarded a HUGE settlement.

COMMON SENSE was preceded in death,

- by his parents, truth and trust,
- by his wife, discretion,
- by his daughter responsibility,
- and by his son reason.

He is survived by his five children:

- I know my rights
- I want it now
- someone else is to blame
- I'm a victim
- Pay me for doing nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

Take time for 10 things

Submitted with thanks by Cathy Follwell

1. Take time to work, it is the price of success.
2. Take time to think, it is the source of power.
3. Take time to play, it is the secret of youth.
4. Take time to read, it is the foundation of knowledge.
5. Take time to worship, it is the highway of reverence and washes the dust from our eyes.
6. Take time to help and enjoy friends, it is the source of happiness.
7. Take time to love, it is the one sacrament of life.
8. Take time to dream, it hitches the soul to the stars.
9. Take time to laugh, it is the singing that helps with life's load.
10. Take time to plan, it is the secret of being able to have time to take time for the first nine things.

“This and That” from our Zany County Gardener Suzanne Smith

On one of the first warm days of spring, put on your inspector's hat and head out to the garden and assess the clean-up needed to see what happened over winter. Indeed, growing a garden and having a beautiful property is a good exercise regime.

- 1. Take an assessment of your garden. How did your garden do this winter?**
- 2. Trim and prune. Be cautious, some bushes are slow to bud. There will be obvious damage that you can get started on.**
- 3. Don't dig too soon. Be patient, (did I just say that) its early days yet. I see the rhubarb emerging.**
- 4. Clean up those pots and bird feeders.**
- 5. Rake and remove old dead leaves from around strawberries and hostas for example.**
- 6. Split perennials. Splitting perennials is a great way to rid the weeds around them, actually the only way.**
- 7. You may want to mulch after raking. I just like to work up the soil and feel that nice warm dirt.**
- 8. It's a good time to empty out our compost bins and spread it on the garden to work into the soil when we are ready to cultivate. Oh, I love the Spring!**
- 9. It's fun to start planting things like onion bulbs and potatoes. The garlic is already starting to show green tips.**
- 10. It's a good time to plant trees and shrubs, also summer bulbs.**

I started my tomato and cucumber and flower seeds indoors two weeks ago. I will put the seedlings in my makeshift cold frame once all danger of frost is over. "Will I", or will I be tempted to test Mother Nature. Probably the latter hehhe!

I will plant peas and onion bulbs in another week or so, both like the cold ground. Potatoes don't mind the cold either. The rest of the seeds will have to wait. I have to tell myself, "Patience is a virtue" where was I when they handed that out?

Tip: My strawberries keep getting pecked by the birds. Well, I will fool them this year. I went to the Dollar Tree today and bought 12 wire garbage pails. The sun and rain can get through, but not the birds.

Good luck, God Bless and Happy Gardening!

A few of Suzanne's favourite Quotes:

"In the Spring at the end of the day you should smell like the dirt"

Margaret Atwood

When you wake up tomorrow, be thankful.

Be thankful for your family.

Be thankful for your friends.

Be thankful for the life you have,
the roof over your head
and the food you have to eat.

Hold someone a little tighter, stay a little longer,
and tell someone you love them.

Never ignore a person who loves and cares for you, because one day you may realize that you've lost the moon while counting the stars.

An old Cherokee told his grandson, "My son there is a battle between two wolves inside all of us. One is evil. It is anger, jealousy, greed, lies, resentment, inferiority, and ego. The other is joy, peace, love, hope, humility, kindness, empathy, and truth." The boy thought about it and asked, "Grandfather, which wolf wins?" "The old man quietly replied, "The one you feed." *anonymous*

Some of my favourites... Deacon Kate Ann

Live in the Moment

Being patient is difficult. It is not just waiting until something happens over which we have no control: the arrival of the bus, the end of the rain, the return of a friend, the resolution of a conflict. Patience is not waiting passively until someone else does something. Patience asks us to live the moment to the fullest, to be completely present to the moment, to taste the here and now, to be where we are. When we are impatient, we try to get away from where we are. We behave as if the real thing will happen tomorrow, later, and somewhere else. Be patient and trust that the treasure you are looking for is hidden in the ground on which you stand.

Henri J. M. Nouwen

Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today.

Ernest Hemingway

Speak to your children and grandchildren as if they are the wisest, kindness kindest, most beautiful and magical humans on the earth, for what they believe is what they become.

Brooke Hampton.

May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet.

And may everyone see the face of Christ in you.

Anglican Blessing

The place to which God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

and

Thus, when you wake up in the morning, called by God to be a self again, if you want to know who you are, watch your feet. Because where your feet take you, that is who you are.

Frederick Buechner

The final word goes to my friend Karen Fitzsimmons, submitted with thanks.

Living in Fear

In our culture of fear – fear mongering in the media fear mongering as a method of selling products and controlling populations we would do well to live courageously trusting in the risen Christ who lives beyond and within each of us.

Let us have Faith

by Helen Keller

**Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature,
nor do the children of men as a whole experience it.**

**Avoiding danger is not safer in the long run than outright exposure.
Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.**

**To keep our faces toward change and behave like
free spirits in the presence of fate is strength undefeatable.**

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“Be not afraid, I go before you always!”

John Michael Talbot youtube