Discovering Spirituality in Nature

November Online Practices – Resting

This month's poems:

From every branch
Leaves drift and mingle down
Saying, "Now!"
Autumn departs until the paths
Taken in leaving cannot be seen.

Adapted from Izumi Shikibu

Very slowly burning, the big forest tree
stands in the slight hollow of the snow
melted around it by the mild, long
heat of its being and its will to be
root, trunk, branch, leaf, and know
earth dark, sun light, wind touch, bird song.

Rootless and restless and warmblooded, we
blaze in the flare that blinds us to that slow,
tall, fraternal fire of life as strong
now as in the seedling two centuries ago.

"Kinship" by Ursula Le Guin

SIT SPOT: The sit spot is an ancient nature-connection practice passed down through many wilderness educators. Read the Center for Spirituality in Nature suggestions here: https://www.centerforspiritualityinnature.org/post/planting-seeds-for-tomorrow. The BTS Center also used sit spots in a Lenten Practice course several years ago.

Home Practice:

Big Picture Exercise: Select a place, either indoors or outside, that is both comfortable and offers a good view of the Living World. Commit to sitting in this place for ten (or fifteen) minutes each day or as often as you can. Gaze at the Living World and do absolutely nothing else. Allow yourself this gift of rest.

Up Close Exercise: If you are outside, close your eyes and allow yourself to just listen without naming or identifying anything you hear. Just listen as if what you hear is music. Observe how this practice helps you to let go.

Exploring Practice:

Where: When you are out walking or hiking, identify a place that you pass regularly.

Set a Boundary: Find a comfortable place where you can sit for a least ten minutes.

Opening: Create sacred space by reading a haiku, a poem or do something else that resonates with you.

The Practice. Gaze at the Living World and do absolutely nothing else, giving yourself the gift of rest. Commit to returning to this place regularly and observing how the Living World is resting.

Closing: Offer thanks or gratitude for what it is. Take several deep breaths as you prepare to leave sacred space.