**Wild Dancing: Embraced By Untamed Love**
Janice Edwards RSM (a seasoned Spiritual Director)
2012

This is an inspiring book about a woman who experienced brain surgery and came to speak of Love and communion. It is full of wisdom about the spiritual life, human suffering, prayer, dark contemplation as well as light and experiences of union with nature, other persons and God.

This book would benefit anyone on the spiritual journey. Since the author is a spiritual director it would be especially helpful to directors and some directees. Those struggling with suffering and those seeking a contemporary vision of the contemplative life would find this book a blessing.

Member Sharing: Carol Brenner, SC

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**Prayers of the Cosmos: Reflections on the Original Meaning of Jesus’s Words**

The book is an eye-opener as to the other possibilities of meanings for the Our Father and the Beatitudes. The author takes each line of both and reinterprets it according to the meanings in the Aramaic language of Jesus. Frequently, these interpretations seem far from the meanings we give to the words. I found much of the book full of surprises.

Member Sharing: Virginia A. Froehle, R.S.M.

Neil translates the Our Father and the Beatitudes from the Aramaic which is a much richer language than Greek or Latin. Our current translation is from the Greek translated to Latin and then to English which limits the possible interpretations. The Aramaic translation enriches our translation and adds many dimensions and images.

Member Sharing: Marilyn Kaiser

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**“No Problem – turning the next corner in your spiritual life”**  Robert J. Wicks
Sorin Books, Notre Dame, IN 2014

The daily reflections are excellent for any of us trying to find God in our ordinary days while struggling with the chaos and busy-ness each day. Wicks invites us to “acknowledge, accept and start where we are” and assures us that God’s grace will carry us around the next corner.”

The format is 20 lessons (practical and short) and thirty daily exercises (tools to conduct your own inner workshop). It’s quite readable and those to whom I’ve offered it have found it helpful.

Member Sharing: Maureen Heverin, SC
Wayfaring – A Gospel Journey in Everyday Life by Margaret Silf  

We’re currently using this for a year-long book sharing and it seems to be meeting people where they are spiritually. She is a very inviting and accessible Christian writer. She connects Scripture, and our everyday lives with insight and creativity. You will recognize Ignatian spirituality in her writing. James Martin, SJ, in commenting on this book, notes that she uses “personal anecdotes, charming candor and elegant metaphors.” That captures it for me!

Member Sharing:  Maureen Heverin, SC

Beyond Blue—Surviving Depression & Anxiety and Making the Most of Bad Genes by Therese J. Borchard 2010

This book is an excellent account of someone who walked with family members diagnosed with mental illness. She, in time, developed symptoms of mental illness herself after becoming pregnant with her first child. This, of course, turned her life upside down. Her research & journey helped me & would help others in Spiritual Direction learn the various types of mental illness & be able to identify the ‘red flags,’ if there are any, when meeting with directees. Treatment options were also described in Therese’s journey. She was diagnosed as bi-polar.

Member Sharing:  Mary Jo Blankenmeyer

The Grace in Dying by Kathleen Dowling Singh  
Harper Collius 2000

Kathleen worked with a number of dying patients through hospice. She describes her experience witnessing their deaths and generalizes about the dying experience. She believes that in death people go through the transpersonal experience to Unity with God, describing the stages and characteristics of each stage. According to Kathleen this is the experience of ordinary people, not those special people who have long been on the spiritual path.

Member Sharing:  Marilyn Kaiser


Being alone, in the dark, feeling ungrounded are emotions most of us prefer to avoid. This book is about BBT’s journey to understand darkness. She purposely put herself in situations of darkness (unlit caves, living for short periods as a blind person, etc.). She also recalls all the times in scripture that God shows up at night. This is a guide through the spirituality of the night. She teaches us how to find God in the darkness and lets us know that darkness has something to teach us.

In the end this ended up being a book about living with loss, which is difficult at any time but especially in a culture that works so hard to look the other way. Much of what is marketed as religion today markets faith in God as protection from every kind of darkness. She says that the real problem with dealing with darkness is not with what is out there as much as it is with our resistance to finding out what is really out there. Suffering comes from our reluctance to learn to walk in the dark.

Member Sharing:  Mooydeen Frees
As Bread that is Broken by Peter G. van Breeman, S.J. copy write 1974

"Acceptance liberates everything that is in me. Only when I am loved in that deep sense of complete acceptance can I become myself"

Merton's Palace of Nowhere - A Search for God through Awareness of the True Self by James Finley copy write 1978

"We hear the true self in a squeaky gate swinging in the wind. We hear it in our next breath. We touch it in our reaching out to our brother and sister. And see, hear, and touch the true self not by mystifying everything but by simply letting each thing be. Each thing is only what it is and in that alone each thing is a manifestation of the ALL from whom all came, in whom all is sustained, and to whom all returns."

Member Sharing: Tom Choquette

An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith, Barbara Brown Taylor
HarperCollins 2009

The author shares how she learned to find God beyond church walls by embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life. In An Altar in the World, Barbara Brown Taylor shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go and in nearly everything we do as we learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and revere the world we live in. Some Chapter titles are: The Practice of Waking Up to God, The Practice of Paying Attention and The Practice of Walking on the Earth just to name a few.

Member Sharing: Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN

The Color of Gratitude: And Other Spiritual Surprises, Robert F. Morneau
Orbis Books 2009

This is a book of poetry. Spiritual Reading? Some of the best for me. Robert Morneau has a surprising way of looking at things; he makes you think in a new way about some very ordinary happenings in life. Take his poem A Time to Kill: “Is murder a part of your history, murder as in killing time?"

Member Sharing: Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN

Sacred Fire by Ronald Rolheiser 2014

I have read and reflected on this book for some time and found it to be not only inspiring but also challenging to know what God invites me and others in each stage of our journey of discipleship.

Member Sharing: Anne Flanagan, SNDdeN
**Pilgrimage into the Last Third of Life (7 Gateways to Spiritual Growth)**
by Jane Marie Thibault and Richard L. Morgan 2012
**Publisher:** Upper Room Books

If you are in the last third of life, the reflections and suggestions for this time are very helpful and practical.

Member Sharing: Anne Flanagan, SNDdeN

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**Jesus the Bridegroom** by Brant Pitre
Random House 2014

In the context of Old/New biblical times, this book is an invitation, a beckoning, a way of realizing the spiritual pursuit, quest to/of the divine. To me, so many of the New Testament stories left “questionable something to carry.” These have ended. Questions over. Pieces have fallen into place.

Spiritual direction is all about relationship. Whether we articulate the kind or not, or the dance, marriage is its name. This book provides the historical context, rationale from the Wedding Feast of Cana, Woman at the Well, Last Supper and Crucifixion. A must read. You won’t be the same. It’s for everyone.

Member Sharing: Suzanne Olmstead

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**God in the Midst of Change** by Diarmuid O’Murchu

This book takes some fundamental beliefs we have and challenges us to see them within the knowledge that has been gained in science and changing social norms. Some of the topics include:

- Confronting distortions; this section discusses Patriarchy, Religion vs. Spirituality, concept of God ruling from the skyline.
- Making Sense of Creative Chaos; this section discusses current trends including mass information, economics, politics, etc. All discussed within history to show how we have arrived here in this chaos.
- Evolutionary Lure of The Future; here Diarmuid’s expertise in quantum physics is applied to our own consciousness and challenges us to see beyond our own time on this earth. Discussion of sustainable earth, economics and Catholicism of the future.

This book gives an excellent look at where we have been so we can understand how we arrived at this chaotic time in our church and our own spirituality. It gave me a better understanding of the Church within society and how very difficult it will be to see real change, yet it also emphasized how critical it is to embrace change.

I would recommend for anyone who wants to grow in their understanding of religion and science and how necessary it is to move into a very new way of understanding God and ourselves.

After each chapter there are questions and activities that can be used personally or with a group.

Member Sharing: Pat Plogmann
The Book of Forgiving (Four-fold Path for healing Ourselves and our World)  
by Desmond and Mpho Tutu (father and daughter)

Teaches one how to grant forgiveness and receive it through a 4-step process:

1. Telling the Story  
2. Naming the Hurt  
3. Granting Forgiveness  
4. Renewing or Releasing the Relationship

Field of Compassion (how the new Cosmology is Transforming Spiritual Life)  
by Judy Cannato

Spiritual Directors today must engage the new vision that is emerging regarding how the new cosmology is transforming the spiritual life. Gives insights as to how we can live and serve with greater passion and compassion. Not a new book, but a good one.

Member Sharing: Fran Repka, RSM

Awaken Your Senses: Exercises for Exploring the Wonder of God, by J Brent Bill, Beth Booram  

Beth Booram is herself a spiritual director, retreat leader, and trains spiritual directors. This book is a useful resource of physical/contemplative exercises to engage our senses as prayer

Here is a review by Parker J. Palmer, author of Let Your Life Speak

"With Awaken Your Senses, Brent Bill and Beth Booram have given us a superb resource for seeking the God of life through sensuous experience, a way of knowing that has been sadly neglected--and too often held suspect--by the church. How did a faith based on the claim that 'the Word became flesh' become so divorced from bodily, incarnate knowledge? Here is a beautiful book that will help us reclaim our bodies, our senses and our relationship with God."

About the Authors:


Beth Booram is the co-founder and director of Sustainable Faith Indy, She designs and facilitates contemplative retreats and speaks around the country on spiritual formation and Christian leadership and is the author or coauthor of several books including, Picturing the Face of Jesus, and The Wide Open Spaces of God.

Member Sharing: Todd Long
This book introduces the reader to multiple, generally well known Authors (24) who have PASSION for EARTH. Examples are: Jane Goodall, Thomas Berry, Thich Nhat Hanh, Thomas Merton, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, John Muir, Wangari Maathi, Julian of Norwich, Hildegard of Bingen, Mary Oliver...  

It presents in brief a background about the Author and a sample of their writings. 

I have not had or taken the time to read lengthy biographies of most of these authors, but most I’d heard of... and wanted to become more familiar with and allow them to touch my life more deeply. There is a definite tone of deep spirituality – woven through the lives of these “Saints and Heros.”

Member Sharing: Pat Bernard, SC