



The hidden sunrise of wonder

A priest friend, in South Africa, wrote and told me of the dying and death of a woman, Jill, who, years before, I had introduced to the Church, which became her life and ministry. At her requiem, Larry spoke of Jill's gift for accompanying people on their personal or spiritual journeys and, in doing so, connected two themes dear to my heart, wander and wonder. I have always felt the two are interconnected and related. We can only wonder if we are prepared to wander, seldom can we have one without the other.

I recall, from the Caminos I have walked, different categories of "pilgrims." There are the bikers, a breed on their own, who shoot by, taking delight in startling walkers, as they disappear into the horizon. Then there are pilgrims, mostly young, athletic guys, who are in constant competition with their Fitbits or iWatches, determined to maintain a brutal mph average. Finally, there are the ordinary pilgrims, wanderers, who engage with the path and nature, amble into ancient, little churches and vast cathedrals, pause for coffee or a chat.

I think, from the Gospels, Jesus was a wanderer. He always seemed to have time to stop, meet whoever came to him, going where invited. I also believe it was while walking, through the Galilean countryside, that he found inspiration for his many parables. Remember the one where he speaks about the sower who scatters seed liberally and extravagantly? Some seed fell on the road, some among rocks or thorns and some into fertile ground. The Divine Sower never ceases sowing, day and night, (a consoling thought). However, it's the wanderer who is able to recognize and receive these seeds, responding in wonder and gratitude. The bikers and Fitbitters are in too much of a hurry to notice. A Camino saying holds true, "Camino is life and life is Camino." How we live, is how we walk the Camino and vice versa.

Discipline is required to dismount from

our bikes, take off our Fitbits, power down our phones and amble through an hour or two of our day, engaging our senses, like antennae, to detect the ever-falling Divine Seeds. Wandering leading to wondering can occur anywhere, on a walk through nature, browsing the Scripture of the day, reading a poem, contemplating a painting, listening to music, reading a novel, looking at old photos, wading through memories when, suddenly, we detect a shift into wonder, the germination of scattered seeds.

Larry, in his homily, used a beautiful quote from G.K. Chesterton's, *Meditation on a Dandelion and the Meaning of Life*, wherein he wrote, "The object of a full life is to dig for the submerged sunrise of wonder." Jill, close to death, was filled with wonder at the next phase of her journey, across the Jordan. May we, like her, dig for the hidden sunrise of wonder in each moment gifted to us.

Blessings,

Michael

The Moor

It was like a church to me.
I entered it on soft foot,
Breath held like a cap in the hand.
It was quiet.
What God was there made himself felt,
Not listened to, in clean colours
That brought a *moistening* of the eye,
In movement of the wind over grass.

There were no prayers said. But stillness
Of the heart's passions – that was praise
Enough; and the mind's cession
Of its kingdom. I walked on,
Simple and poor, while the air crumbled
And broke me generously as bread.

R.S. THOMAS, *Poems*

Creative and logistical support for Michael, his *Buen Camino* newsletter and HermitFish.com website are provided by Enigma | LA, enigmala.com

Michael News

The community will gather this month at the Hermitage in Big Sur, CA, for the Solemn Profession of a young Italian monk, Thomas, who has transferred his stability to New Camaldoli.

After various distractions, Michael is back to his daily walking-meditating routine, when he remembers you.

'Levante' 3 is here

The *Levante 3* video retreat has finally launched. This retreat is Michael at his very best. Talks include, *Confronting Our Shadow*, *The Prayer of Place*, *Dreaming the Impossible*, *Inner Weather* and *Looking for the Beyond*. For upcoming dates visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/levant3-schedule>

Get your Michael 'fix' 24/7

Michael's entire audio retreat library is available online 24/7, via subscription – over 70 hours of inspiration. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/about-the-audio-library>

Grateful for your support

Michael wishes to thank everyone for your continued prayers, good wishes and support. Donations to Hermit Fish, Michael's 501(c)(3) nonprofit, are fully tax deductible. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated. FID: 82-2489475

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Levante 3 Video Retreat

AUGUST 17-23 | Home Retreat • Online

Levante 3 information:

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Levante 2 Video Retreat

AUGUST 10-16 | Home Retreat • Online

Levante 2 information:

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Levante 1 Video Retreat

AUGUST 3-9 | Home Retreat • Online

Levante 1 information:

<https://hermitfish.com/levante-1-retreat-houses>

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