

Song

Sagebrush Snow Winds

By Robert Mirabal



"The desert does not mean
the absence of men,
it means the presence of God."

— Carlo Carretto

Prayer Leader:

Syndie Eardly

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**Explore the mystical terrain
of divine grace**



Our prayer is characterized by silence ~

Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.

God is present in all our lives.

God cares for us, and
our life experiences are a source
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence
we share from our hearts.

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An Interfaith Ministry of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine

To Ponder

Toward Home

*By Gerald May, excerpted from **Addiction and Grace***

Struggle with attachment can be seen as warfare with an insidious enemy, or it can be seen as a romance in which the soul seeks the beloved one for whom it thirsts. Partly, this is simply a matter of attitude. In another sense, however, the transformation of desert into garden is made possible only by God's grace raining upon the areas of our lives that are truly wastelands.

The desert is the arena of life where we struggle with addiction, in agonizing warfare or in faith-filled hope. It may be freely chosen, as part of a willing and intentional process. In this case, the desert might be a real physical wilderness that one chooses to enter as did the desert fathers and mothers. Or this chosen desert may exist entirely within one's soul. Or one may be led into a desert that is not of one's own choosing, as in the exile of Israel or the countless deprivations of addiction that are thrust upon us in the course of normal life.

External or interior, chosen or not, the desert is characterized by a soul suffering from withdrawal symptoms, a mind and body deprived of false securities and therefore left to explore the mystical terrain of personal willpower and divine grace.

At its mildest, the desert is a laboratory where one learns something about addiction and grace. In more fullness, it is a testing found where faith and love are tried by fire. And with grace, the desert can become a furnace of real repentance and purification where pride, complacency and even some of the power of attachment itself can be burned away, and where the rain of God's love can bring conversion.

Reading

The Desert Has Many Teachings

By Mechthild of Magdeburg

In the desert,
Turn toward emptiness,
Fleeing the self.
Stand alone,
Ask no one's help,
And your being will quiet,
Free from the bondage of things.

Those who cling to the world,
Endeavor to free them;
Those who are free, praise.
Care for the sick,
But live alone,
Happy to drink from the waters of sorrow,
To kindle Love's fire
With the twigs of a simple life.
Thus you will live in the desert

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...