

Expressions

A Publication of the Claremont Center for Spiritual Living
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The Edge of the Sea by Rachel Carson

Rachel Carson (1907-1964) was a marine biologist who saw with the eyes of an artist, thought with the mind of a philosopher, and wrote with the heart of a poet. Yet she never sacrificed the precise analysis or rigorous logic of a scientist. At the beginning of a new year, here is an excerpt from her book "The Edge of the Sea" (1955) that considers our connection to all of life and time.

In my thoughts of the shore, one place stands apart for its revelation of exquisite beauty. It is a pool hidden within a cave that one can visit only rarely and briefly when the lowest of the year's low tides fall below it, and perhaps from that very fact it acquires some of its special beauty...

Whenever I go down into this magical zone of the low water of the spring tides, I look for the most delicately beautiful of all the shore's inhabitants - flowers that are not plant but animal, blooming on the threshold of the deeper sea.... creatures so exquisitely fashioned that they seemed unreal, their beauty too fragile to exist in a world of crushing force. Yet every detail was functionally useful, every stalk and hydranth and petal-like tentacle fashioned for dealing with the realities of existence. I knew that they were merely waiting, in that moment of the tide's ebbing, for the return of the sea. Then in the rush of water, in the surge of surf and the pressure of the incoming tide, the delicate flower heads would stir with life. They would sway on their slender stalks, and their long tentacles would sweep ("The Edge of the Sea" continues on page 2)

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Claremont CSL 69th Annual Meeting Sunday, February 24

Our congregation's 69th Annual Meeting will be held in the sanctuary on Sunday, Feb. 24 beginning 12:30 PM. Please attend to hear year-end summaries of projects, learn about our finances, approve next year's budget, and elect new members to the Board of Trustees.

We have 4 positions open on the Board of Trustees: 3 for 3-year terms (replacing Mary Cordova-Breen, Edward Graff and Patty Powers), and 1 for a 2-year term (replacing retired member Brad Orton).

If you would like to serve as a Trustee, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee: Chris McDowell, Graham Dunlap, or Sarah Redmond. You can also contact Rev. Tracy.

Edward Graff, Editor

Send your essays, poetry, interesting pictures, inspirational/thought-provoking quotations to:

eemgraffvz@gmail.com



("The Edge of the Sea," continued from page 1)
the returning water, finding in it all that they needed
for life...

For each day that I visit the pool on the lowest
tides of the summer they seem unchanged – the same
in July, the same in August, the same in September.
And they are the same this year as last, and
presumably as they will be a hundred or a thousand
summers hence.

Simple in structure, little different from the first
sponges that spread their mats on ancient rocks and
drew their food from a primordial sea, the sponges
bridge the eons of time. The green sponge that carpets
the floor of this cave grew in other pools before this
shore was formed; it was old when the first creatures
came out of the sea in those ancient eras of the
Paleozoic, 300 million years ago; it existed even in the
dim past before the first fossil record, for the hard
little spicules – all that remains when the living tissue
is gone – are found in the first fossil-bearing rocks,
those of the Cambrian period.

So, in the hidden chamber of that pool, time
echoes down the long ages to a present that is but a
moment.

As I watched, a fish swam in, a shadow in the
green light, entering the pool by one of the openings
low on its seaward wall. Compared with the ancient
sponges, the fish was almost a symbol of modernity,
its fishlike ancestry traceable only half as far into the
past. And I, in whose eyes the images of the two were
beheld as though they were contemporaries, was a
mere newcomer whose ancestors had inhabited the
earth so briefly that my presence was almost
anachronistic.

As I lay at the threshold of the cave thinking those
thoughts, the surge of waters rose and flooded across
the rock on which I rested. The tide was rising.



Sponges on the ocean floor.

Happy New Year! *by Michael Price*

I have a friend who always strives to be in the
NOW. She says, "Happy New Moment".

I like that, because every moment of our lives, we
have a new opportunity to make something better - to
improve a situation or a relationship, or to break out of
a rut. We can take a step back (or a step forward!) to
reflect and choose a different path, a better path.

And, we can do this any time of the year. Yet, for
many the New Year is the time they choose to initiate a
change. (Notice the word "initiate") The fact is that
many people don't stay with those changes.

So, how do we keep on this new path we have
chosen? It's done in increments. If you've been to any
of my classes, you may remember the story about Brad
"staying alive 10 seconds at a time", or the story about
Larry "skiing 200 feet at a time".

The path before you may feel daunting if you look
at the whole thing. Do it in increments - in chunks -
one step at a time.

And, if you stray from the path, don't beat yourself
up. Just recognize that right now, right this moment
you can make a new choice, and then wish yourself a
Happy New Moment!

Use your Fearless Thinking skills to discover in
what arena you are most creative, and give your
attention and energy to that arena.

Be a Fearless Thinker.

*Michael George Price is the creator of The Courage of Fearless
Thinking System. He is an author, teacher, consultant, coach,
and motivational speaker. Michael teaches The Courage of
Fearless Thinking System to Businesses, Associations, Schools,
Sports Teams, Churches and Individuals. Visit
www.FearlessThinking.com for additional information or
contact Michael directly at Info@FearlessThinking.com.*

Read Past Issues of 'Expressions'!

For past issues of *Expressions*, go to:

<http://www.claremontcsl.org/expressions/expressions.html>

**And if you have something you would like to
contribute**, please email it to: eemgraffvz@gmail.com

Trying To Predict What's Next by Edward Graff

An old New Year's observance you probably never heard of was a Scottish ritual, called (in Gaelic) *dà-na-coille*, or roughly in English "The Night of the Fecundation of the Trees." John Sinclair described it in his book "Statistical History of Scotland" in 1794. It was observed from ancient times up until the mid-18th century.

On the evening of January 1st people would gather on hilltops or in the center of meadows, and they would pay close attention to the least breath of wind. If it was a still night they would wait there until mid-morning of the next day. This must have been a very cold watch to keep, all night long in the dead of winter. But being Scottish I'm sure they had some festive ways to keep warm...

They believed the general weather for the year could be determined by the direction and strength of the wind on the year's first night. The best omen would be a westerly wind, which meant a mild winter and an early spring.

These days we recognize such attempts at predicting the weather as superstition. One is tempted to ask: How many years did they compile observations on the year's weather and found the wind direction on January 1 a better predictor than, say, December 31 or January 2?

Predicting weather is important for all kinds of activity, but especially farming. We have cultivated fields for over 10,000 years, but the first barometer was only invented 476 years ago. Before that someone in the village might predict a change in the weather because their joints hurt (unless they were hunted down for witchcraft).

We're a lot better now at predicting weather, but many other things still seem to be a matter of chance. And we still look for omens to make predictions - astrology or Tarot cards, for example. My personal belief is that some things are determined by destiny (our genes, our gender, our birthplace), some are purely a matter of chance, but our free will can overcome both destiny and chance.

Herman Melville gives a beautiful metaphor of how destiny, chance and free will are interwoven (though he gives chance the final say). In chapter 47 of *Moby Dick*, he describes himself standing at a loom with Queequeg as they weave a mat together:

» I was the attendant or page of Queequeg, while busy at the mat. As I kept passing and repassing the filling or woof of marline between the long yarns of warp, using my own hand for the shuttle, and as Queequeg, standing sideways, ever and anon slid his heavy oaken sword between the threads, and idly looking off upon the water, carelessly and unthinkingly drove home every yarn: I say so strange a dreaminess did there then reign all over the ship and all over the sea, only broken by the intermitting dull sound of the sword, that it seemed as if this were the Loom of Time, and I myself were a shuttle mechanically weaving and weaving away at the Fates.

There lay the fixed threads of the warp subject to but one single, ever returning, unchanging vibration, and that vibration merely enough to admit of the crosswise interblending of other threads with its own. This warp seemed necessity; and here, thought I, with my own hand I ply my own shuttle and weave my own destiny into these unalterable threads.

Meantime, Queequeg's impulsive, indifferent sword, sometimes hitting the woof slantingly, or crookedly, or strongly, or weakly, as the case might be; and by this difference in the concluding blow producing a corresponding contrast in the final aspect of the completed fabric; this savage's sword, thought I, which thus finally shapes and fashions both warp and woof; this easy, indifferent sword must be chance – aye, chance, free will, and necessity – no wise incompatible – all interweavingly working together. The straight warp of necessity, not to be swerved from its ultimate course...free will still free to ply her shuttle between given threads; and chance, though restrained in its play within the right lines of necessity, and sideways in its motions directed by free will, though thus prescribed to by both, chance by turns rules either, and has the last featuring blow at events.

Calendar of Events for January, 2019

Claremont CSL Events

Ongoing:

Sundays -

AA Meetings, 8 AM; Chapel
Meditation, 10 AM; Chapel
Sunday Service, 10:30 AM; Sanctuary
Fellowship Hour, 11:30 AM; Holmes Hall
Apostolic Church, 2:00 PM; Chapel
Living Proof Meeting, 4:30 PM; Chapel

Mondays -

ManKind Project, 7 PM; Chapel

Wednesdays -

Meditation, 6:15 PM; Practitioner Room
Wednesday GATEway Service, 7 PM; Chapel

Thursdays -

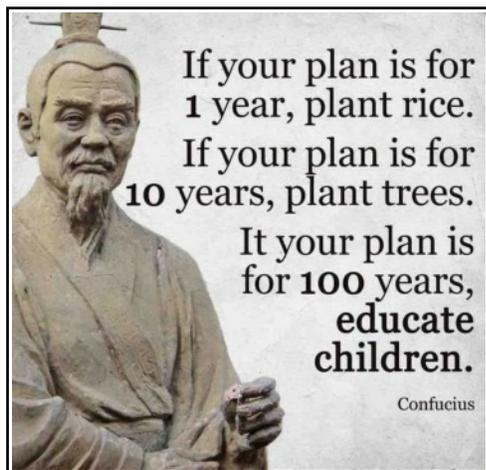
Kindly Conversations, 10 AM; Chapel

Saturdays -

Yoga classes are canceled until further notice...

For January:

- 6 Call to Prayer Sunday, Sanctuary.
Potluck Sunday, 11:30; Holmes Hall.
- 10 No Brown Bag Lunch with Rev. Tracy today -
She will be on vacation.
- 18 Sacred Frequencies Sound Meditation,
7-8:30 PM, Chapel.
- 24 Brown Bag Lunch with Rev. Tracy, 11:30 AM;
Library



Found and shared by Sarah Redmond

Sacred and Cultural Events

- 1 New Year's Day – International
St. Basil's Day – Greece
Gantan-Sai – Japan, Shinto; New Year holiday celebration lasts 7 days.
- 2 Berchtold's Day – Switzerland; Honors Duke Berchtold V who founded Bern, Switzerland's capital. He promised to name the capital after the first animal he killed in a hunt – a *bern* (bear).
- 5 Guru Gobind Singh's birthday – Sikh; The 10th and last living Sikh Guru. He founded the *Khalsa* brotherhood.
- 6 New moon and partial solar eclipse
Christmas – Armenian Christians
Epiphany – Western Christian; Celebrates the arrival of the three wise men in Bethlehem.
Three King's Day – Christian; In South America, Latin America and parts of Europe, the end of the Christmas season is a traditional time of gift giving.
- 7 Christmas – Coptic, Eastern Orthodox Christians; Some Eastern churches follow the Julian (lunar) calendar, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian (Western) calendar this year.
- 13 Lohri – Hindu, Sikh; Bonfires are lit to mark the change to longer days and more sunshine.
St. Knut's Day – Finland, Sweden
- 14 Christmas – Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christian
Pongol – India
Makar Sankranti – India, Hindu
Seijin No Hi – Japan; A coming-of-age celebration for youth who turn 20 years old. The family visits shrines to announce their adulthood to the spirits.
- 19 Timkat / Theophany - Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christian; Marks Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist.
Sultán (17th month) – Bahá'í
- 21 Full moon – Total lunar eclipse
Martin Luther King Jr. Day – USA
Thaipooam Cavadee – Mauritius, India
- 25 Robert Burns Day – Scotland; Honors Scotland's national poet, born in 1759.

Licensed Practitioners

You can email prayer requests to:
prayer@claremontcsl.org

You may also call Practitioners directly
at the following numbers:

Neysa Burrous, RScP
909-948-6929
Diane Clements, RScP
909-947-5197
Marianne Cordova-Breen, RScP
909-392-3934
Ima Lee Moore, RScP
909-987-8886
Patty Powers, RScP
909-636-7690
Sarah Redmond, RScP
909-392-9343
Brad Wethern, RScP
909-994-7440

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and log in to your amazon account as you always do.
You'll see your account normally, but now amazon
will donate 0.5% of all your purchases to the Clare-
mont Center for Spiritual Living!

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Sunday Hospitality -
Patty Powers, 909-636-7690
Librarian, Historian, Sound Ministry -
Ed Graff, 909-938-9676

Bottom of the Barrel

Music and Lyrics by Amos Lee

I keep on laughin' to keep from cryin'.
I keep on dreamin' to keep from dyin'.
I keep on tryin', I ain't gonna stop.
Get right down to the bottom of the barrel
and float back on top.

We all know someone who's always hurtin',
The sun is shinin', they draw the curtain.
One thing for certain, the pain ain't gonna stop.
You get right down to the bottom of the barrel,
you float back on top.

'Cuz I know the grass is always greener
in someone else's yard.
And the world is so much meaner
when your heart is hard.

I go out walkin' in any season.
It could be rainin', it could be freezin'.
I don't need no reason, it's just so pleasin',
I can't stop.
You get right down to the bottom of the barrel
and float back on top.

Hear Amos Lee sing this song by pasting this link in your browser:
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Song+of+the+Barrel+Bottom&&view=detail&mid=9DFD79389BA1B4DD619E9DFD79389BA1B4DD619E9&&FORM=VRDGAR>