



Worth the wait

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Ezekiel 36:24-28

This time every year I find myself wondering why the lectionary propels us back to the events leading up to the crucifixion. We've been through Lent and Holy Week; we witnessed the horrors of Good Friday and we experienced the dank darkness of the tomb. Then we said and sang "Alleluia" gratefully and gladly as we celebrated the resurrection. So why must we now go backwards? Can't we move forward into light and life? It seems particularly appropriate that we should do so as the signs of summer start to appear all around. The seedlings peeping out of the soil and the green shoots in the hedgerows have waited the winter. Yet still they wait. Bud waits to blossom into flower, and shoots wait to clothe the trees in lush leafy green.

There is a quality about this time between Ascension and Pentecost – a moment suspended in time – when, yet again, our breath is baited. Jesus has ascended to be with his Father but the Holy Spirit has not yet been sent. God has even more to give.

And so we wait, and in the waiting time we have today's words from Ezekiel, bringing the promise of Pentecost: "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

And the most wonderful thing about it? God's promise of the Spirit has already been fulfilled, and is renewed in us with every beat of our heart, and every time we draw breath. 🌱

Holy Spirit, you complete and fulfil us. Teach us how to live in these holy, in-between moments. Teach us to relax and be real for one another in the waiting time, to live out the promise of Pentecost, until your Spirit bursts into the world. Amen.

Inner Journey, Outer Journey

by James Roose-Evans

Inner Journey, Outer Journey was first published over thirty years ago and has remained an enduring classic, described by Rowan Williams as "A very precious and very practical book which deserves to be loved and revisited often."

Some people claim that God is solely immanent – that is, hidden away in the psyche. But God is also transcendent, outside and beyond the present dimension of time and space. To be truly *homo religiosus* (a religious person), one must bring together the outside and the inside, finding God both "out there" and "in here". It is here that

the creative process comes into its own, assisting the spiritual process. From childhood onwards my ability, at certain moments, to act or visualise – through dance, gesture, movement, sound, drawing, painting or words, these inner states of worship and conflict, yearning, lust, love, anger and jealousy – has enabled me to shed skins and go on growing. By visualisations and by acting out it is possible to bring together the outer and the inner in our daily living. 🌱

James' blog can be found at: www.jamesrooseevans.co.uk.



His book is available from Redemptorist Publications:
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Walking with Poppy

"Wait!"

by Gillian Cooper

One of the most useful commands Poppy learned during her puppy training was "wait". Some of her training has lapsed a bit over the years, but "wait" still gets her attention. It stops her in her tracks if she's running towards danger, and makes sure she stays where she is put. She is good at waiting;

if I go out and leave her with a friend, she lies facing the door, waiting for me to come back.

Between Ascension and Pentecost the disciples had to wait. After all the excitement of Easter, for the moment there was nothing to do but wait for what would come next. And we are still waiting, to see what God will do next with us and in the world. It is harder for us than for Poppy. We are impatient for results. The Church's calendar helpfully gives us this pause, to remind us that good things can come to those who wait. 🌱

“ Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither.

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), writer and theologian