



La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

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E-News and Eco-spirituality Calendar

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(Our monthly reflections are archived in the Blog on our web site.)

September Sky and Deepening Interiority

I gratefully look back to the first day of La Vista's past Earth Literacy programs when participants would be invited to choose a natural subject and speak in its name as we processed around the driveway. The purpose of this activity was to deepen our appreciation for the wonderful *interiority or subjectivity* inherent not only in the beings we represented, but also in every being. It was always an eye-opening experience, and we came away feeling more in communion with life around us, richer for this awakening.

When it was my turn I usually chose clouds for my subject since I have always been charmed by their ever-changing beauty and sense of presence. I loved speaking for them! Some years ago I found a passage about the sky in Gerald May's book *The Wisdom of Wilderness* that spoke about interiority in a touching way. Wanting this passage to sink deeply into my consciousness I adapted his words, creating a meditation for myself. I hope it speaks to you, too.

Meditation

*Sooner or later, I suspect,
the sky could teach us everything.
It is willing for that.
It waits to be noticed, to be looked into.*

*The apostle Paul said that we live
and move and have our being in God.
If that's true, one might ask,
how come God seems so far away?*

*Maybe it's something like the sky.
The sky often seems distant,*

*but it's always embracing us;
it always has and always will.*

*It not only holds us; it flows through
us. We breathe it.
It's in our blood, in every cell.
And always we are soaring through
its endless reaches.*

*I can almost feel the sky
wanting to be appreciated,
loving to be wondered at.*



*It forms thousands of events to get our attention.
It manifests as a cloud right around us,
and we say, "It's foggy."
It showers us, and we say, "It's raining."
And it storms.*

Following this meditation, it might be fruitful to participate in *skying*! I am grateful to John Constable, English landscape painter, for this word describing the practice of lying with your back on the ground (or leaning back in a chair) and gazing contemplatively at the clouds. Meditation plus this kind of embodiment can become a spiritual practice freely offered and gratefully received any day with a cloud-filled sky!

September 2: Full Corn Moon and Corn Sweat



Photo by Alexis Antonio on Unsplash

Another gift of September's sky is a full moon that traditionally corresponds with the harvesting of corn, taking its name from this agricultural event. The significance of the corn moon recently gained added meaning for me after reading an article about "corn sweat".

Some lighthearted meteorologists use this funky name for the more technical term "evapotranspiration", the process through which

atmosphere from open water and ice surfaces, bare soil and vegetation - such as corn is released into the air. When corn crops mature they act like straws drawing up soil moisture and traveling away, carried by warmer air. The result? The Increased humidity the Midwest is known for.

Understanding part of the reason for the Midwest's humidity somehow helps me to survive it, especially when I know that September's full moon and the corn harvest predict less humid days to come. This information will be part of my meditation as, with gratitude, I watch the moon rise and shine in the sky. And your full moon energy? Where will you find it on September 2nd?

September 8 Work Day in the Oblate Preserve **9:00 am - Noon**

On last month's workday we were blessed with a visit by the Habitat Strike Team which is an arm of the Great Rivers Research and Education Center's conservation program focusing on management of private lands in our local area. Team members include students and interns from Lewis and Clark Community College's Restoration Ecology Program.

Working at La Vista is an opportunity for them to gain valuable experience as they learn restoration practices, management techniques, and ecology of our native ecosystems. These dedicated young people bring hope to our area, promising a healthier bioregion both now and into the future. We thank Cody Berry, Project Coordinator, and Debbie Newman, Natural Areas Preservation Specialist, for their leadership!

If you want to join our volunteers in September call 618-466-5004. We maintain distance throughout our workday. Please bring your own water and snacks.

September 19 **Seeking Balance at the Autumnal Equinox Celebration** **2:00 - 4:00 PM**

Equal hours of daylight and darkness define the equinox, since our sun passes directly over the equator this time of year. As days continue to shorten, let's gather to be grateful for the forces that keep



our precious planet balanced, warm, well-lit and golden. Our celebration of the Equinox will respect social distancing and require the wearing of masks. Registration: 618-466-5004

Looking Ahead...

Friday, October 2, 6:30 - 8:30 pm Climate Fiction Book Discussion
Call for information: 618-466-5004

