



La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

December 1, 2017

E-Newsletter

December, 2017 Eco-Spiritual Calendar



This is an image of Advent for me. I love the blues and purples early in the evening as the sun sets on the horizon in December. It calls me to treasure the coming darkness, to respond with peace and calm as I await the inevitable return of the Light. I feel myself moving in the rhythm of a lower expense of outward energy as well as the call to deepening inwardness. I try to align myself with this spirit daily in Advent.

This brief meditation was inspired by Robert Hamma. In his book *Earth's Echo*, Hamma leads the reader to explore one aspect of nature in specific movements: **encountering** it; **sensing** its beauty; **feeling** its comfort, **standing** in awe; **recognizing** our powerlessness; **listening** to its call; **moving** in its rhythm; and **carrying** it onward within us. What a wonderful way to continue to heal the division between ourselves and the divine in nature during this season! May your daily Advent meditations guide your way to Christmas.

ADVENT RESOURCES FOR YOU

All Creation Waits:

The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings

by Gayle Boss

Deepen your daily practice of the Advent season by pondering twenty five stories of how wild animals, birds and insects naturally adapt when daylight shortens and temperatures drop. An original woodcut image accompanies each inspiring reflection, intensifying the message that darkness is not an end but the way a new beginning comes. "Here are twenty five fresh images of the foundational truth that lies beneath and within the Christ story." You might want to purchase the book, and there is a digital version you may be able to access from your local library. Don't miss it!

"Each of the beautiful creatures in this little book is a unique word of God, its own metaphor, all of them together drawing us to the One we all belong to. Adapting to the dark and cold they announce in twenty-four different ways the Good News of Advent: that through every dark door the creating Love of the universe waits." - Richard Rohr, OFM

Advent in the New Universe Story

Found online in *Eco-Spirituality Resources* by Terri MacKenzie

This thoughtfully prepared Advent program provides an opportunity for Christians to deepen our understanding of the Christmas and Incarnation reality in the context of the New Universe Story: To access this resource, google: *Advent, 2017 Advent Resources/Eco-Spirituality Resources*

These are the four topics in this Advent resource:

FEASTS AND PROGRAM

December 8, Immaculate Conception and December 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe

Mary is a symbol of "profound cosmological relatedness" according to Charlene Spretnak in her book *Missing Mary: The Queen of Heaven and Her Re-emergence in the Modern Church*. In this spirit, devotion to Mary contributes to healing our alienation from the fact of our "embeddedness in the cosmos".

In medieval paintings Mary is shown with her cloak spread open to shelter all in her care. Today we are reminded that all creation is also sheltered by her motherly care of our common home.



December 16: Winter Solstice Celebration and Cosmic Advent Wreath Lighting 7:00 - 9:00 pm

For our Solstice Celebration on the longest night of the year we'll tend the darkness by lighting a Cosmic Advent Wreath. This adaptation of the traditional Advent wreath brings Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* to life in a special way. We will also have our annual Ecological Re-Commitment Ritual. Please join us and bring a seasonal snack to share. We'll provide drinks, including Mexican Hot Chocolate.

Cost: Optional donations welcome.

Registration: Call or email us: 618-466-5004 info@lavistaelc.org

December 25: The Feast of Christmas and the Evolution of Love

When I am in need of a great homily that has the universe story as its context, I go to The Well Spirituality Center and read an archived homily by John Surette. Follow this link and imagine yourself hearing these beautiful words opening the Christmas scriptures for you: <https://csjthewell.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/December-25-2015.pdf>.

