

In Communion with All That Surrounds Us [LS 216]

By Joanne Gallagher, csj



When I first read *Laudato Si'* in 2015, my heart and soul jumped in delight. Over and over I was drawn to sections that were in synergy with CSSJ spirituality. I experienced our charism alive in this document. We are one with a universe where, “there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face.” [LS 233]. Here was Pope Francis speaking about the whole universe as our dear neighbor.

Today, in the midst of our cataclysmically altered universe, what was inspiring in 2015 now becomes a call to engage in inner transformation. Pope Francis writes, “The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. For this reason, the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion.” [LS 217] The realization that our world has been irreversibly altered by events in an open

market 7,380 miles away speaks volumes to how everything is connected.

I continue to wake up each morning to spectacular sunrises and walk by the river where spring is alive in newness. How is it that nothing has changed, yet everything has changed? What personal transformation is being called forth by this global transformation? “Christian spirituality proposes an alternative understanding of the quality of life, and encourages a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption.” [LS 222].



Courtesy of Pixabay

How can I, personally, and we, together, surrender to the inner transformation and challenge of these words?