The World Community for Christian Meditation

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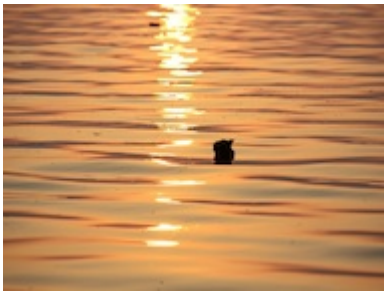
Saturday of Lent Week 3



An inexperienced gardener at this time of year in the northern hemisphere struggles against pruning the branches and hedges that are just beginning to bud. Cutting the branches back seems like an offence against the life-process that is breaking into its new cycle; and there is the fear that you will stunt growth for the new season.

It needs a more experienced mentor to start the cutting and slicing on your behalf; and then, trusting him, you join in. Jesus liked to uses images of growth and expansion from the natural world to illustrate his teaching but he also spoke of the need for pruning the vine of life.

It is hard to do this to ourselves because understandably we are looking for expansion and enrichment. We expect to get fruits from the meditation as soon as we start. When at first we feel reduction rather than release and a quiet deepening rather than a mighty blast-off, we rebel against nature and try to take control again.

Soon however the grace that works in nature makes itself felt as a subtle energy of hope and vision. In our peripheral vision we start to see that a process of transformation is in fact underway ? something new is coming into being. Then the pruning knife becomes a friend and the mantra sinks into the rich soil of the heart.

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