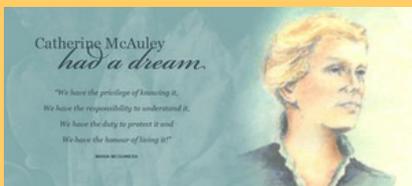




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A Blessing Path- Catherine's Quest



*Sweet mercy! Soothing,
patient, mild and kind,
Softens the high and lifts the
fallen mind,
Knows with soft rein and even
hand to guide;
Nor yields to fear, nor knows
exactng pride*

Welcome to the Autumn 2014 edition of REFLECTIONS



Creation as Teacher

Imagine if you will that you are sitting on the bridge at Well of Mercy. The fall season has just arrived for a visit. What gifts does she bring? The air provides a fresh coolness. The water in the stream is clearer. You see a beautiful array of colors in the trees and you are able to see deeper into the woods as the trees drop their leaves. Flowers are fading and setting seeds for future growth. Even birds appear different as they begin migrating toward warmer weather.

Exciting price,

*Not soon provoked, it easily
forgives,*

*Is all to all, and with a look
relieves,*

*Soft peace it brings wherever it
arrives,*

*Removes our pains, and
crowns with peace our lives.*

*-Poem excerpt, A Little Book of
Practical Sayings, Advices and
Prayers of Mary Catherine
McAuley, Founderess of the
Sisters of Mercy*

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Nourishment for Body & Soul Favorite Guest Recipes cooked with heart from Well Staff:



African Chicken Peanut Stew

*A hearty West African-inspired
stew of chicken thighs and
legs, sweet potatoes and
peanuts that is perfect for a
chilly day.*

Ingredients:

2-3 pounds chicken legs, thighs

The reality is that many of us won't even notice what God, through creation, is saying to us both literally and symbolically. In our lack of awareness we may be missing the messages nature is presenting. This is the sad consequence of busy, noisy, cluttered and demanding lives. Did you find yourself reacting to the opening sentence in this reflection? Who has time to sit still? Who desires to be alone in the woods? Who wants to still their minds and enter into the quiet? My answer is people who are too overwhelmed and weary to do one more thing. People, who like falling leaves, must surrender to solitude and stillness rather than being overcome by illness. People who hear themselves saying, "My life and everything around me is so loud and demanding that I can't even think straight." People who recognize that their life is no longer flowering or that new seeds are trying to set within them. Like the clearer water of fall's offering, what clarity am I seeking? Am I being called to flow beyond where I am into deeper waters?

I believe our lives are in danger when we fail to realize that we are guests of God and that creation is our sustainer as well as teacher. Nature has lessons to offer and will I yield to her teachings?

I am sitting on the bridge at the stream at Well of Mercy. I am praying for those of you who have visited Well. Leaves are swirling about and in the deep recesses of my heart I am grieving the fact that so many lives are out of sync. As Sisters of Mercy, Sister Brigid and I are called to strive to be in right relationship with self, others, God and creation. This is not simply a call on our lives, it is a challenge for all of us. May we all pray to have the courage of falling leaves and release all that stands in the way of living in right relationship.

Sister Donna Marie Vaillancourt, RSM
Co-Director, Well of Mercy

and/or wings
3 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 large yellow or white onion
cut into big chunks
3 small zucchini cut into chunks
A 3-inch piece of ginger, peeled
and minced
6-8 garlic cloves, chopped
roughly
2-3 pounds sweet potatoes,
peeled and cut into chunks
1 15-ounce can of crushed
tomatoes
1 quart chicken stock
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup roasted peanuts
1 Tbsp ground coriander
1 teaspoon cayenne, or to taste
Salt and black pepper
1/4 to 1/2 cup of chopped
cilantro

Instructions:

1 Heat the vegetable oil in a large soup pot set over medium-high heat. Salt the chicken pieces well, pat them dry and brown them in the oil. Don't crowd the pot, so do this in batches. Set the chicken pieces aside as they brown.

2 Sauté the onions in the oil for 3-4 minutes, stirring often and scraping any browned bits off the bottom of the pot. Add the ginger and garlic and sauté another 1-2 minutes, then add the sweet potatoes and stir well to combine.

3 Add the chicken, chicken broth, crushed tomatoes, peanut butter, peanuts, coriander and



Well Spotlight- Nurturing Spiritual Self

Imagine walking 500 miles in 37 days, averaging 15-20 miles each day. Strangers may walk near you, but your journey is very unique. Yet there is an equalizer; no matter your position in life, at the end of the day you are just as sweaty and tired as everyone else.

In September of 2013, Martha Harper, 66-year-old Well of Mercy board member, followed the Camino de Santiago ("The Way") from St. Jean Pied de Port, France to Santiago, Spain. Since the Middle Ages, millions of pilgrims have walked this route to the grave of St. James. Their reasons are all different.

"...it was part of my spiritual journey...to be apart from regular life," Harper explains. "I go to Well of Mercy to get away from my everyday world and walk the woods...I experience God in nature by myself. It was the same on the Camino."

She began the walk with a friend who was injured during the first weeks. Harper continued alone, but worried about occasional hazards like shin splints or falls. To overcome her anxiety, Harper sang what she calls her theme song: "Be Not Afraid", by John Michael Talbot. She avoided more common blisters by changing her socks 2-3 times each day, airing out her feet and coating them with Body Glide to prevent chaffing. All this effort was worth it for Harper, who says the experience was spiritually enriching.

" [I learned to] trust God to always be with me...I also trust myself more, mentally and physically, and

cayenne and stir well to combine. Bring to a simmer and taste for salt, adding more if needed. Cover the pot and simmer gently for 90 minutes (check after an hour), or until the chicken meat easily falls off the bone and the sweet potatoes are tender.

4 Remove the chicken pieces and set them in a bowl to cool, until cool enough to touch. Remove and discard the skin if you want, or chop it and put it back into the pot. Shred the meat off the bones and put the meat back in the pot.

5 Adjust the seasonings for salt and cayenne, then add as much black pepper as you think you can stand—the stew should be peppery. Stir in the cilantro and serve by itself, or with simple steamed rice.

Cooks Tip: Use chicken legs, thighs or wings for this recipe. They have more flavor and will hold up better with the flavors of the stew than breast meat. Coarsely chop vegetables for a hearty texture.

To make the vegetarian version (my favorite), if you want to add it, substitute vegetable broth for the chicken broth, and instead of chicken, use tempeh. I use Tofurky brand Coconut Curry tempeh (it's gluten-free). The tempeh is cut into pieces and simply put in the stew with the other ingredients. No other prep is needed.

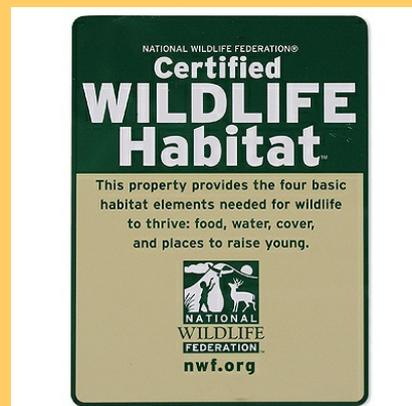
trust others,” Harper explains. There were times when she veered off the trail, but strangers always guided her. During one dark, foggy morning, Harper could not find the path and began walking in the wrong direction. An experienced pilgrim appeared and walked with her for the entire day. She never saw him again.

“I believe these strangers were angels, showing me the right way,” says Harper. “...I have greater trust in my “big S” self, that part of myself that is God within me. That’s what happens when I visit Well of Mercy. I experience God within...and receive assurance that I am on the right path.”

Harper says she wishes she had more time to enjoy the many towns along The Way, but she realizes life never provides enough time. The real meaning of her journey on the Camino is revealing itself during the life she is living after her walk.



Well's Certified Wildlife Habitat Designation



As you enter Well of Mercy grounds and proceed on Mercy Lane through the woods, you will notice a sign on the right side of the road that Well has been officially designated as a “Certified Wildlife Habitat”, by the National Wildlife Federation.

is needed.

Karin Sawhill, Well Cook

Retreat @ Well of Mercy

Along the path of life we all have moments when we need temporary respite to heal, grieve, and restore our body, mind and spirit.

Well of Mercy, a ministry of hospitality and healing sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, provides a quiet sanctuary for adults seeking right relationship with self, others, God and creation.

By offering spiritual companionship, emotional support, respectful acceptance and sacred space, Well of Mercy contributes to the rest and renewal of its guests.

[Contact](#) Well of Mercy and be sure to include your phone number to place a request for your [individual retreat](#) today~

For quicker response please phone the office during regular hours: (704) 539-5449

Wed.-Sat., 10:00a.m.–5:00p.m.

Help Wanted

Well of Mercy relies on the time, talents and treasures of many

Well's habitat of wooded areas, meadow, bramble patches, thickets and shrubs, dead trees, streams and springs, and native food sources of berries, nectar and fruit welcomes resident and migrating wildlife.

A core principle of the Well's mission is that Well of Mercy seeks to ensure the health and well-being of its "native ecosystems and natural areas" - "a sustainable future for our ... Earth."

In doing so Well provides the four basic habitat elements needed for wildlife to thrive: food, water, cover and places to raise young.

We'd like to introduce you to Kevin Campbell, a native of Harmony and grower and gardener of North Carolina native plants, who cares for Well's landscape. He is the go-to "expert" for the conservation and protection of the plants within Well's natural community. Kevin is working with board member, John Zinkevich, in identifying plants. Hopefully this information will be available in booklet form for guests in the future.

[Support NWF and send a FREE Ecard](#)

Well of Mercy Reflection Benediction



EQUINOX

The Garden releases its last radiance, not as something failed, but as its full reason for being: to

people.

We would like to extend a warm welcome and heartfelt gratitude to our NEWLY appointed volunteer coordinator Marion Zinkievich. Marion has been a long time volunteer and contributor to Well of Mercy in so many ways.

Our greatest needs currently are landscaping, cooks assistant, , etc.)

If you are interested in volunteering at, or on behalf of, Well of Mercy please [contact Marion](#)

give continually, to its last bit of energetic being. Its giving is its beauty.

It is a smile, it is the heart of love.

So the birdsong that surrounds me is given, not away, but into the world.

It is given as rain, as sunlight, as snowfall and autumn leaves. It falls on our ears as what it is, with no deception, the complete truth of being.

Even the smell of decay, drifting from the deer, dead by the side of the road, says:
"This is what I am and no other. I do not pretend to be. Even in death I speak without deceit, even unto my flesh, my very bones."

Be tolerant of these songs, my musings on the way these things are. For I cannot give up this Summer except by giving myself as well, fully and completely, into the praise of our mutual beauty, our total loving of the World.

Richard Wehrman

~Wishing you clarity and inspiration in the months ahead~ Well of Mercy Staff

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