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Springtime (Fr. Michael Gillis)

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Mallards ducklings with mother

“Let there be banished hence dejection born of passions, and thoughts that rise like tempests. In this wise shall the springtime of faith sprout up and blossom forth.” (Matins Aposticha, Thursday of Thomas week)

Here we are in the springtime. Everything is blooming—the time of budding has already past. And yet we can miss it: not merely the season of the year, but the season of the Church. Thoughts besiege us. Dejection is always near. The passions don’t go away. But where we put our focus makes all the difference.

I can sit here all day looking at the glowing screen before me and never walk outside to smell the blossoms and see the new life pushing out of everything living (the first mallard ducklings of the season are scurrying around the pond now). And even if I see it, if my mind pays too much attention to the mental tempests, I will not see it.



Spring Blossom

Every living thing is a revelation, a disclosing of the mind of God, of the Word of God. In that God spoke everything into existence, everything-especially every living thing-reveals the Word of God: the life-creating Grace, Energy, Life of God. If only we would pay attention, we would “read” the Word of God everywhere.

But paying attention is not easy. What’s easy is to allow ourselves to be captivated by passions, by “thoughts that rise like tempests,” by the dejection we so easily slip into when we realize that the day was spent running very fast and getting nowhere.

But the Church reminds us today to banish such things, not to allow them to remain in the kingdom of our heart. They will appear, they will try to stay, but we have the power (and the responsibility) to banish them. They are the thorny brambles that choke out life.

And if we will do this, if we will banish dejection and the tempest of confusing and conflicting thoughts, then the promise is that “the springtime of faith [shall] sprout up and blossom forth.” I could use a little springtime in my soul. I bet you could too.

By Fr. Michael Gillis

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