

CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS

A place for solitude, prayer and reflection

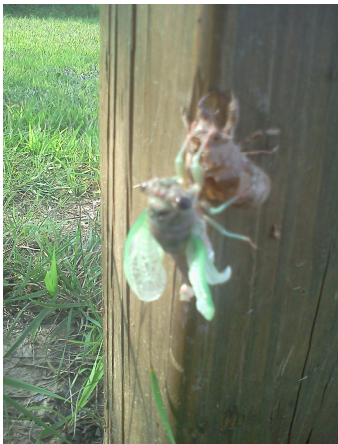
Hermitage Retreat Center

Fall October 2013

Transformation....

This morning I hiked up to the swing about 7:15 AM. While sitting on the swing reading, "Choose Joy, Because Happiness Isn't Enough" by Kay Warren, I noticed an odd insect on the post of the swing—brown outer "shell"—I thought to be a beetle or June bug. A few minutes later, I realized the insect was shedding its outer shell--literally climbing out of it.

For the next two hours I watched the insect (which I later determined was a cicada) work its way out of



the shell. At first, I noticed bent thin green things I thought were legs. Over time, they unfolded and opened to be magnificent translucent greenish wings. Beautiful!

Once successfully shedding its shell, like a new born foal, it tried out its new legs--wobbly at first, then more confident.

I hiked to the far meadow to pick blackberries and on my way back, I stopped by the swing to check on "my friend." It was still clinging to the post but had made its way higher up the post. I encouraged it to "try out its wings" and fly. I imagine it will know when it is time to do so.

An incredible time of watching the transformation take place.

In a typical day of my life, I would not have had the time to even notice an insect on a post, let alone watch it for 2-3 hours!!!

I am grateful for the slower pace at CITW and the

many blessings that unfold, like the wings of the cicada, each day.

Socrates said, "Beware the barrenness of the busy life."

Psalm 127:2 reads, "It is useless to work hard for the food you eat by getting up early and going to bed late. The Lord gives food to those he loves while they sleep."

Lord, may I carry this peace, this pace, back to my day-to-day life. So blessed to be here at CITW again.

Patricia August, 2013

Strings of Faith Christmas Concert Fundraiser

The concert will be held on Sunday, December 8, from 1:15 to 4 pm. Doors open at 1:15 pm. You can bid on silent auction items, buy mystery gifts or bakery and other goodies before the 2 pm concert by Strings of Faith.

Refreshments will be available after the concert.

Everyone who attended last year really enjoyed the beautiful Christmas music. Join us for this wonderful event and bring your family and friends along for a delightful Sunday afternoon of music, food and friendship. You will be receiving an invitation in the near future.



In the Wilderness...

Phillip Brown finished up the excavation of the drainage basin between the main house and the parking lot. The dirt that was removed was used around the property to fill in holes and eroded areas that needed more dirt. For those who have been here, you have seen many newly grass seeded places along the paths. They are a great addition to areas that often remained muddy long after the rains came. When the grass fills in they will be great walking paths. The basin will become the home to some new native plants and trees.

Over the past year, we received a Generous Promises Grant and a Change for Global Change Grant from the Congregation of St. Joseph for the purpose of replacing native trees and prairie plants. We are greatly appreciative of their generous support for this project. We just finished planting 215 prairie plants in various areas on the property, such as the drainage basin area by the parking lot, the base of the main house hillside, near the granary, and on the upper meadow (2 plots).



We have planted maples, oaks, red bud, and river birch on the property. We will be receiving a load of more than 10 trees this week that we will plant on the property. These will be great additions to the native environment giving shade for everyone, homes for some animals, and beauty year round. We have been diligently watering them until the ground freezes this winter and we also love it when God waters them abundantly from the heavens.

The Christmas Concert Fundraiser is fast approaching (front page). If you would like to donate items for the silent auction or mystery gifts, contact Sr. Julia; 815-947-2476 or citw@dishmail.net. You may also volunteer to help us out on the day of the event. We look forward to seeing you there.



Our last Resting With the Holy Guided Retreat in November is filled. With this mailing you will find enclosed flyers for the 2014 Guided Retreats. If you are interested in either of the retreats, register as soon as possible because they often fill up fast. Also, we are taking hermitage reservations for the first half of 2014 and have some weekends filled already. There are still many days available in December also. Fall and winter are great times to experience CITW. The way pages fly off the calendar, November days will pass quickly, so have a Happy Thanksgiving! Sr. Julia

Have you thought of remembering us?

- When you are making your will and are thinking about charitable bequests, have you ever thought about including Christ in the Wilderness? This would help us immensely in the future as we might continue our retreat ministry.
- Our legal title and address are
Christ in the Wilderness
7500 S. Randecker Road
Stockton, IL 61085-8922
We are a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) .