

# CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS

A place for solitude, prayer and reflection

Hermitage Retreat Center

Spring April 2014

## *Finding Balance*

This is my 3<sup>rd</sup> week-long retreat here at Sabbath Place-CITW. Today is Sunday, Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>. Yesterday I felt like I was coming home. I love this place. The trees, the wind, the many animals, especially the Solitude with God.

We are having a new moon, so, I went out last night about 11 pm and it was DARK. My heart was beating fast and I looked up into the Heavens. I have never, ever seen so many stars! So many, I could barely find the ones I know! I had my little flashlight and since I heard the coyotes earlier, close by, behind the hermitage, I took the flashlight out onto the porch. Did I mention it was DARK?! I laugh at my fears—and my longing to join with nature. I hear a sound and flash my light up the hill into the pitch darkness. I see 10 sparkly lights, 5 pair. They are very close. My heart is beating fast. I can see no form only sparkles. In the morning, I walked up the path behind the hermitage and found my friends. A mamma, daddy & three kids. These deer must have gotten a good laugh at me last night!!! What lovely creatures they are. Wonderfully made.



This week has truly been a time of receiving gifts and I am so grateful and blessed. So much connection with Spirit, with nature, the wildlife and my inner self. I am reminded, once again, of the importance of maintaining the balance of giving and receiving. Each time, I come I

am re-minded about how Sabbath restores us. It is my intention to take at least 1-2 days per month and recreate what I have here, at home. Solitude and quiet. My soul needs it. I am also recommitted to my daily practice of meditation. For me, prayer or talking with God/Spirit is the easy part---the listening of meditation is the balance.

And so I leave tomorrow refreshed, and restored. I am going to miss the QUIET, the night sounds, the wind with no voice or motors and of course, the Deer.

Until next time---May God Bless and Keep you all.

Peace, Pam J

## *Amazon Smile*

In Fall of 2013 Amazon.com established the Amazon Smile Foundation with the purpose of giving 5% of their customers' purchases to a Nonprofit of the customer's choice.

Christ in the Wilderness has signed up with this program. If you usually shop on Amazon.com, you can log in to Smile.Amazon.com using your current Amazon account and shop to support Christ in the Wilderness. Once you are logged in, choose Christ in the Wilderness, Stockton, IL from the list of charities. Then 5% of your purchase will be donated to CITW. There is no cost to you as a customer or to CITW to take advantage of this opportunity.

If you have any questions or for more information, contact me at 815-947-2476 or [citw@citwretreat.com](mailto:citw@citwretreat.com)

## *Guided Photography Retreat*

We had our Photography Retreat in February, so it was definitely winter time. Dan Pollack who led the retreat has posted some of the photos that he took



on a website. Here is the link to view the photos: <http://www.zenfolio.com/danpollackphotography/p553954044>. They are beautiful. I hope you don't mind being reminded of this past winter, now that spring-like weather has finally come our way. Thanks Dan for sharing.



## *In the Wilderness...*

What a great feeling to look out the windows and not see a snow-covered landscape. We have not quite been warm enough to have green ground cover yet, but it is coming. I see robins, a lot of cardinals, chickadees, and a few of the bluebirds that just arrived. The forsythia is budding and hopefully will be blooming by Easter. The pussy willow has white puffs all over it. I don't think we can deny that Spring is here although we still have the occasional very cold day, especially with the winds blowing.

CITW is a bit more social media savvy these days. We introduced our new website in January. Some of you have discovered our Christ in the Wilderness Facebook page. Here is the Christ in the Wilderness Facebook page link: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Christ-in-the-Wilderness/257739718945>. You can also search for Christ in the Wilderness on your Facebook page. Send a friend request and we will gladly let you join our list of friends. We also have a Business Pinterest page: <http://www.pinterest.com/citwilderstock/>. You can also search for Christ in the Wilderness on your Pinterest page. Pass along any of these links to family and friends. The more we can get the word out to people, the more people can enjoy retreat time at CITW.

We had our Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser in February and it was a great success. We had lots of people come for delicious food and they had a great time visiting with each other.

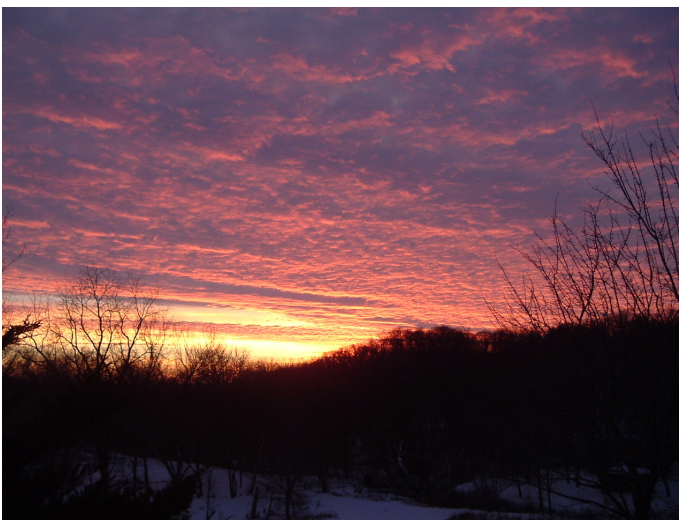
If you are looking for a way to serve at CITW, please contact me by phone at 815-947-2476 or email at [citw@citwretreat.com](mailto:citw@citwretreat.com). We have numerous ways for you to be involved, whether you are an individual looking for a quick project or you belong to a group looking for a weekend service opportunity. Whatever your interests and talents, we will work with you to tailor the right project for your needs, skills and time frame. Here are areas in which you might be able to lend your talents: Outdoor Projects, Office/Administrative Projects, Professional/Business Expertise and Resources .

The sunset photo below was taken by me earlier this year. The other photos in this newsletter were taken by Dan Pollack during the Guided Retreat.

Get your late spring, summer and fall retreat times on our schedule. We are already filling up some of the

times quickly. Have a blessed Holy Week and a grace filled Easter. God bless all.

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) .