



Waited On By Angels

After his baptism in the Jordan river, Jesus spent time in the wilderness, and amid a retreat with harsh temptations, danger and difficulty, “the angels waited on him” (Mark 1:13). Did they feed him? Bring him water? Cushion his head in sleep? Tend his wounds? Wipe his tears? I’ve always wondered.

Throughout our scriptures, angels are often described with human characteristics. They are sent as messengers to protect people and to proclaim the way and will of God. They stand, walk, speak, and touch. In many instances they look like people and yet, it is clear they are not people with superpowers or a special connection with the Holy One. They are not humans who turn into angels after death. God created angels separately from human beings, as something else entirely.

Angels are spoken of in the scriptures, but are they around today? The reading from the first Sunday in Lent (Mark 1:9-15), that includes the quote above, sent me looking for angels in my life; those messengers of presence, protection and proclamation. I recently attended a quilt show in Raleigh where I believe I might have been waited on by angels.

There were hundreds of quilts on display, and I was taking my time, soaking in the artistry,

the colors, the details of piecing and stitching, the bold messages of the quilters. Like many artists, some quilters use their medium to process what is happening in the world and in their lives. There were quilts referencing illness, racism, death of a loved one, parenthood, gun violence, democracy, and much more. As

I was viewing the quilts, I rounded a corner and saw a quilt that took me by surprise. I stood in front of that quilt and wept.

The quilt was beautiful and heartbreaking; a memorial and a stark reminder of the children and teachers killed in the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas.¹ While I ugly cried, two women stepped up to stand beside me. One handed me tissues. They waved other people away from me, protecting me from the crowd. They stood quietly with me until I stopped crying, then gently led me to a chair and handed me water to drink.

We parted a few minutes later. I saw the women again the next day in a group conversing about whether such quilts should be in a quilt show and one of them said, “Watching you cry made me realize those quilts aren’t talking about issues. They’re talking about people.”

Those two women were the epitome of presence, protection and proclamation. Perhaps they were indeed angels, created by

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The Stations of The Cross

Early Christian pilgrims traveled to the Holy Land to visit the sites important in the life of Jesus. Our very own Saint Helena was important in identifying and preserving the knowledge of these sites. During Holy Week, pilgrims walked the path that Jesus took from Caiaphas' palace to Golgotha to the tomb.

Others who were unable to make the trip to the Holy Land started a local practice of praying the "Stations of the Cross" with simple crosses at each station. Eventually, paintings or icons were added to illustrate each station, and the number of stations settled at fourteen.

The Book of Occasional Services includes prayers and a scripture or other spiritual reading for each station. The Stations of the Cross can be prayed singly or in a group, and involves starting at the altar, walking to each station, reading its prayer, and concluding at the altar.

Sr. Ellen Francis, OSH, has painted these beautiful Station of the Cross icons which hang in the OSH chapel.

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Invitation To Pray the Stations

We invite you to walk and pray the Stations of the Cross in the convent chapel during non-service times throughout the year.

During Holy Week, on Palm Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Good Friday, these times are available:
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Other than Holy Week, the following times are available except on Mondays and Fridays:
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Prayer booklets for your walk are in the chapel near the first station. Please return them prior to leaving the chapel. Or, you may wish to pray or meditate in your own way as you walk the stations.

If you wish to pray with a group, please notify and receive confirmation from Samantha Stoume, our office manager. You can reach her Monday through Friday at 803-426-1616. Please provide the number in your group and the time you wish to be in chapel.



Thanks Be to God for Bishop Visitor Carlye Hughes!

April 2024 will mark the third full year since OSH sisters elected the Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes, diocesan bishop of Newark NJ, as our bishop visitor. We thank God for the wisdom of this decision and the wisdom of Bishop Hughes who recently worked (and played) with us during her annual convent visit.



Bishop Carlye Hughes
and Sister Miriam Elizabeth



Sister Ellen Francis, Bishop Hughes
and Sister Carol Andrew

Standing behind Bishop Hughes are
Sisters ES, Ann, and Linda.



Sisters ES and Linda, Bishop Hughes
and Sister Faith Anthony





Sr. Rosina, home (alleluia in Lent!) from several months in Africa, is pictured with Sadie Stoume, our office manager, Samantha Stoume's, daughter.

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God to lead and accompany people to the thin places where heaven and earth overlap, where the will and the way of God are revealed in their care and their message. I will never forget them or their message.

–Sr. Miriam Elizabeth, OSH

When have you perhaps been waited on by angels? As Holy Week approaches, what do you need in the way of presence, protection or proclamation?

1 "Uvalde, Texas" won first place in the Use of Negative Space category at QuiltCon 2024. You can view the quilt here: <https://quiltcon.com/quiltcon-2024-winners/>.

Sunrise over the convent back yard



CONVENT OF SAINT HELENA

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We will let you know in advance of the guest house opening date.

A Warm Welcome to New Associate Julia McKeon

The Rev. Julia McKeon was received as an associate of the order on March 14. Julia and her husband, John, live part of the year in Pennsylvania and winter in Aiken, South Carolina to accommodate John's work.

Julia's ministries include an active spiritual direction practice and working as a supply priest in the Episcopal dioceses of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Upper South Carolina. Journaling and centering prayer are important spiritual practices for her.



Sister Miriam Elizabeth, John and Julia McKeon, and Sister Ellen Stephen

Centering Prayer

Workshop & Weekly Group

Kick-Off Workshop
Friday, May 3
10am to 11am

The Convent of Saint Helena – Episcopal

Weekly Centering Prayer Group
Friday Mornings

- ✓ 10am Centering Prayer in the Chapel
- ✓ 10:30am Coffee/Tea in the Refectory
- ✓ All are welcome!



Sister Linda will lead the group in centering prayer, which has been an anchor in her life over the last 25 years. Her lived experience and passion for centering prayer make her an ideal guide for the group.



Kevin Sharpe is a teacher of Christian spirituality and will facilitate a variety of bi-monthly centering prayer workshops to help us deepen and commit to a vibrant centering prayer practice.

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