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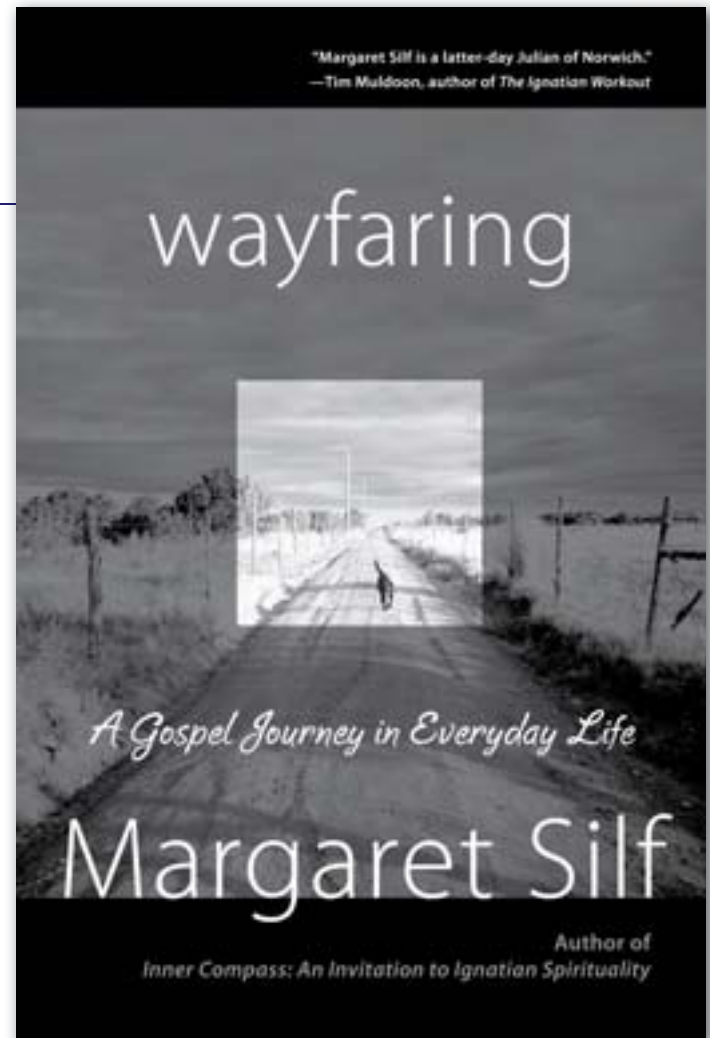
WAYFARING

A Gospel Journey in Everyday Life

Margaret Silf

Internationally best-selling author Margaret Silf combines her compelling prose with nuanced understanding of Ignatian spirituality in *Wayfaring*. Silf connects the structure of creation, incarnation, death, and resurrection to an experiential walk through the events and stories that create a map and compass for our journey, whatever our tradition. With a combination of personal anecdotes, charming candor, and elegant metaphors, Silf reinforces the value of deep self-reflection and invites us to create our own personal retreat.

ISBN: 9781933495170 / 256 pages / \$16.95



A Preview of the April 2009 Selection

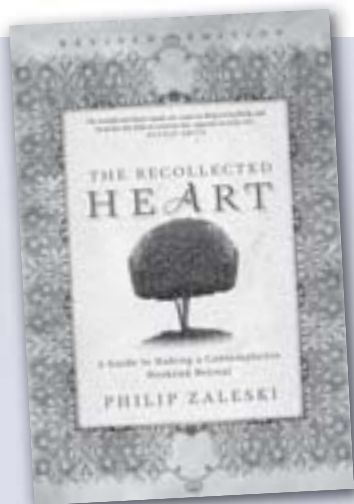
THE RECOLLECTED HEART

A Guide to Making a Contemplative Weekend Retreat

Philip Zaleski

Amid the chaos of work, family, and the myriad responsibilities that dominate our lives, the need for retreat remains ever-present. Calling us to solitude, reflection, and quiet, Philip Zaleski offers his monastic prescription for how to properly and effectively find spiritual refreshment. He outlines the timeless pattern of The Rule of St. Benedict and brings us to a renewed sense of self and spiritual wellness.

ISBN: 9781594711992 / 192 pages / \$15.95



THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY

Wayfaring: It is such an appealing word. More human-scaled and inviting than, say, its cousins seafaring and warfare; less charged with political baggage than another cousin, welfare. Before we go wayfaring our friends wish us farewell—yet another related word. These are words about getting from one place to another, making one's way, getting along. The act of conveyance may be literal or metaphorical, the method serene or treacherous or violent or confusing. But there's always a sense of movement or passing through.

Wayfaring is not a word we are likely to hear every day. Years may pass before we ever hear it uttered in the course of an everyday conversation. Few of us are wayfarers anymore, making our way on foot, moseying, taking our time. We are all about hustle and bustle, traversing the distances between the places of our lives as quickly as we can. In our journeys we are people of the thoroughfare, the wider the better, and don't get caught going too slowly in the passing lane. We notice the wayfarers, if we notice them at all, because they slow us down when they want to cross the street.

There is a plant called the Wayfaring Tree (*viburnum lantana*). It is a deciduous tree that grows to about eight or ten feet in height and is sometimes described more as a shrub than as a tree. It likes to grow, among other places, along woodland edges, and it is that characteristic that is most likely responsible for its name. People walk along woodland edges and establish paths and trails there—the paths traditionally followed by wayfarers who might take their rest in the shade of its leaves—so it comes as no surprise that it has also been known as the Wayfaring Man's Tree. It is also sometimes called the Hobblebush, and one can easily imagine the sore-footed wayfarer taking her rest beneath it.

There is something about the idea of wayfaring that, once you have encountered it, makes you feel that you have always known it and understood what it means in a broad, even spiritual sense. I first heard the word as part of the old folk hymn "Wayfaring Stranger," and I never needed a dictionary to understand what it meant. "I am a poor wayfaring stranger traveling through this world of woe." It's tough to recognize the world of woe when you are speeding down the highway or have paid your airfare. Clearly, this stranger is traveling at walking pace, a conscious witness to his or her surroundings—the woe, the steep trails, the danger that accompanies anyone as they make their way across the landscape.

The Way, of course, was what Jesus and his early followers called his teachings. Jesus and his bunch were perfect examples of wayfarers. In their historical time and place, of course, they had far fewer choices than we do now, but I suspect that if Jesus had made his appearance in a more technologically advanced world he would have supplemented his call to "Follow me" with "Walk beside me; stand with me; sit with me. Become with me a wayfarer." His is not a message to be absorbed on the fast track. It is one to be taken in slowly, word by word, like a poem.

Margaret Silf was on to all of this, certainly, when she named this book *Wayfaring*. She says, "This book is an invitation to walk your own living pathway in the companionship of Jesus of Nazareth." Silf walks beside the reader through the moments and events of Jesus' life, and in companionable prose invites us to reflect with her and to understand Jesus' life and teachings in the larger context of our history, our world, and our own lives. Through her sharing she opens us to avenues of thought that we might otherwise have never encountered.

Margaret Silf is a wayfarer, but she is no stranger. She invites us open-heartedly into her journey and inspires our hearts to open as well. And, unlike the wayfaring stranger of the old folk song, she is not bound to a theology that finds the answer to "this world of woe" only in a distant afterlife. In the song, the wayfarer is "only going over Jordan, only going over home," implying that the only way out of toil, suffering, and woe is through literal death and the achievement of "that bright world to which I go." For Silf, that ultimate goal begins to be realized in the act of the journey itself. It is on the journey that we find ourselves experiencing "bright world" moments, as Silf says, "simply by walking the way alongside the One who is the Way, and in loving relationship with fellow wayfarers."

WAY-WARD

by Irene Zimmerman

I saw the place only in my dream.
I have no map to tell me where to find it.
I do not know its name. But this is sure:
God has called me there and I must go.

*In my dream I stopped at strangers' houses,
asking where I was, describing the place
that I was looking for—"Woods, a lake . . ."
They were sorry, but they couldn't help me.*

*I found a footpath following the contour
of a high, steep hill.
Above me loomed a new-plowed field;
a valley gaped below.*

*I felt and heard the ground shake
and ran ahead. Earth rumbled down
behind me and took along with it
my way back home.*

God of woods, lakes, up-lifting hills,
stay with me wherever it is I am.
You are the Way along the unknown way.
Lead me on.

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Irene Zimmerman, O.S.F., has been a School Sister of Saint Francis for fifty years, and her poems have appeared in *The Christian Century*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Cross Currents*, *The Liguorian*, *Review for Religious*, *St. Anthony Messenger*, *Sisters Today*, and other publications. Her most recent collection of poems is *Incarnation* (Cowley Publications).

READER'S GROUP GUIDE

THE WAYFARER'S MILESTONES: AN EXERCISE FOR THE JOURNEY

Choose a good-sized map of any location—your home state, a park, even an imaginary land—to use as the basis for a graphic journal of your walk with Margaret Silf and *Wayfaring*. As you read the book you will no doubt encounter many milestones of your faith journey. These may be milestones you have met in the past or some you are reaching in the present moment. They may be “highs” or they may be “lows,” moments of feeling lost or moments in which you feel in touch with the “bright world” yearned for in “Wayfaring Stranger.”

On the map you have chosen, mark each milestone as you recall it or as it happens. Use a pen, pencil, marker, or even a

crayon; create cutouts from photographs and paste them to the map. Connect these milestones in a way that makes sense to you as their witness or owner. Your journey may be linear or circular, forward, backward, or sideways. Perhaps it moves in fits and starts, or in smooth, long arcs. You may wish to label or date the milestones, or present them without commentary.

No one needs to understand your map—not even you. Let it unfold like life, with some planning and some surprises, and don't be shocked if the map itself, at some point, suggests the next direction to take.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP USE

Wayfaring is a rich and ample resource for group reading and reflection. Groups may wish to determine for themselves the most agreeable way to proceed, but some suggestions follow:

- Meet once per week for ten weeks and read a chapter per week.
- Meet once per week, but study and discuss each chapter for two, three, or four weeks.
- Take time to engage the in-chapter reflections, but do not feel that you need to complete all of them.

- Assign a different leader for each week.

Group use can also be facilitated electronically via e-mail or a simple group interface such as those that can be set up for free at websites like Yahoo! Groups. In this scenario, participants from around the neighborhood or around the world can share their reflections, journal entries, and ideas about the seven sorrows on a week-to-week basis at their own convenience.

If you wish, begin or end your group meetings with the following adaptation of the Twenty-Third Psalm.

A WAYFARING PRAYER

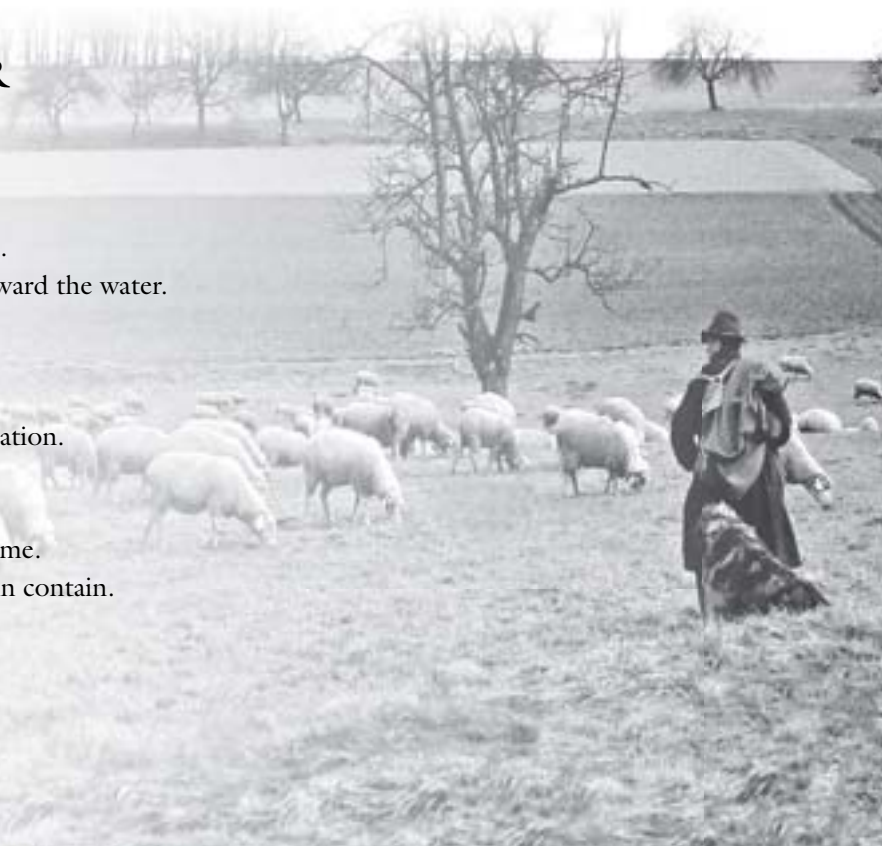
Our God is the wayfarer's shepherd,
and satisfies our cravings.

When I need rest,
my shepherd brings me to a green pasture-bed.

When thirst troubles me he sets my feet toward the water.
Reenergizing my soul—my soul!—
the path of God's justice becomes my path.

When death haunts me my fear is set aside,
for the shepherd's staff is truly a sign of consolation.

My shepherd feeds me,
even in the presence of those who would hurt me.
He blesses me and fills me with more than I can contain.
In the hands and home of such a guide
I will be surrounded everyday
by all that is good and just and merciful—
in the hands of
the wayfarer's shepherd.





JOHN KOTRE'S STORY OF EVERYTHING

John Kotre is a writer and psychologist living in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He admires the “spirit of exploration and wonder” Margaret Silf brings to spirituality, especially the place of Jesus of Nazareth in the “grand narrative” of humanity and of the universe itself.

Kotre, too, explores these themes in a cosmological adventure he calls *The Story of Everything*. His website, *The Story-*

of-Everything Place, is the home of his blog about the human story and the human place in the universe. A former Jesuit seminarian, Kotre invites wayfarers from all walks of life—science, religion, business, academics—to interact in the context of the stories and narratives by which they make sense of the world. Visit www.thestoryofeverything.com to join him, and others, in a conversation by the wayside.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST



WAYFARING STRANGER

The folk song “Wayfaring Stranger” has been sung and recorded over the decades in myriad styles and genres. A search of the song’s title at YouTube brings up dozens if not hundreds of versions by famous performers as well as by amateurs. A few notable performances, found at these links, demonstrate the song’s enduring beauty:

RON HYNES:

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=UY2FbOVUQYo



ALISON KRAUS AND UNION STATION:

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=LpFDQv0kXRE



JACK WHITE:

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=8ZXBw-9GYC0

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY



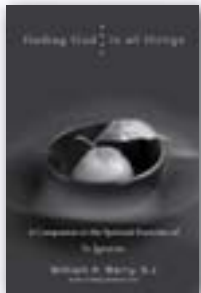
ALSO BY MARGARET SILF

AT SEA WITH GOD

A Spiritual Guidebook to the Heart and Soul

Margaret Silf develops the image of life as a sea voyage to shed new light on the spiritual journey. Her creative use of scripture, reflection questions, journal starters, and real-life seafaring wisdom enables readers to reflect on their experience with fresh insight.

ISBN: 9781933495118 / 192 pages / \$15.95



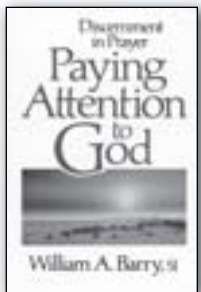
FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS

A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius

William A. Barry, S.J.

Dispelling the myth that spiritual retreats are only for those who can get away for an extended time, seasoned spiritual director William A. Barry, S.J., gives new life to the spirituality of St. Ignatius and encourages readers to seek the transforming power of the Spiritual Exercises.

ISBN: 9780877934608 / 144 pages / \$12.95



PAYING ATTENTION TO GOD

Discernment in Prayer

William A. Barry, S.J.

Helps people pay attention to their mysterious encounters with God.

ISBN: 9780877934134 / 128 pages / \$9.95



ENTERING CHRIST'S PRAYER

A Retreat in 32 Meditations

Eric Jensen, S.J.

Jesuit retreat leader Eric Jensen leads spiritual seekers in meditations on Christ's spoken and unspoken bond with his Father, introducing readers to Jesus' life as a life of prayer.

ISBN: 9781594711343 / 224 pages / \$17.95



THE GOD WHO WON'T LET GO

Peter van Breemen, S.J.

In this beautifully written, personal exploration, van Breemen enters the depths of forgiveness, mercy, compassion, and resurrection. A book written for our age, its message is timeless: there is absolutely nothing that can sever us from the love of God.

ISBN: 9780877937463 / 160 pages / \$12.95



MOMENT BY MOMENT

A Retreat in Everyday Life

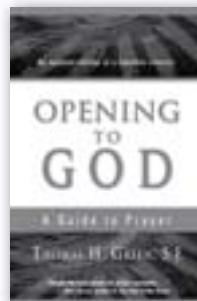
Carol Ann Smith, S.H.C.J.

Eugene Merz, S.J.

Drawing on the classic retreat model The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, *Moment by Moment* offers a new and inviting way to find God in our often busy and complex lives.

ISBN: 9780877939450 / 96 pages / \$12.95

THOMAS H. GREEN, S.J.



OPENING TO GOD

A Guide to Prayer

Opening to God demystifies prayer, explaining what it is all about, and offers techniques that ready the soul to encounter God.

ISBN: 9781594710711 / 128 pages / \$11.95

OPENING TO GOD AUDIOBOOK

ISBN: 97808671168693 / 3 CDs, 180 min. / \$22.95



WHEN THE WELL RUNS DRY

Prayer Beyond the Beginnings

"Builds on Green's classic and best-selling primer on prayer, *Opening to God*. A marvelous example of theological devotion."
—Catholic Library World

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WEEDS AMONG THE WHEAT

Discernment: Where Prayer and Action Meet

For all those who are called to discern God's will in very concrete terms.

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This item is non-returnable.



