

Awaiting Whatever Melody the Divine Will Play

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After experiences at Flueli Ranft and Riva San Vitale, I felt certain that I could expect no more. Surely God would not give me more right now. How much more could I handle?

Sleeping as best I could after the Thursday and Friday events, I awoke Saturday with plans to visit other old churches with my companion. The first church that I asked her to stop at turned out to be dedicated to Saint Thomas. I carry a photo with me of its central stained glass window. The last church we stopped at was dedicated to Saint Nicholas von Flue.

It was noon. My companion and I chose to go separate ways for the balance of the day. She drove me back to Morcote. Before long, I was climbing the steep hillside toward Santa Maria del Sasso. This church stands in one of the most picturesque locations in the world. It sits on the point of the mountain above the village of Morcote on the Lake of Lugano with Italy directly across the water. I've spent hours in the churchyard peering over the lake with the winds from Italy caressing my body.

By this time, when I entered a church, I experienced a sort of positive apprehension. However, there was nothing unusual to note at Santa Maria del Sasso or the separate Battistero. I often lay on the floor to absorb some of the art restoration on the ceiling of the Baptistry.

Next, I began to climb the very steep steps to see how far up the mountain I could go. I thought the view from the top would be extraordinary. It was. Yet, the space in between was to offer my third day of mystical experience.

There is a short plateau in the climb at about the height of the top of the church bell tower. I noticed two markers and curiously searched to see if they were significant. I paced off half the distance between them and faced toward the bell tower. In front of me was a large birch tree. To its right was another of the same species about twenty feet away. To its left was another. They created the three points of a shallow triangle.



I moved toward the center tree and as I approached I began to tear and felt the now familiar surrender overtaking me. I knelt before the tree sobbing and knew that I was to kiss the ground. I did and the bells in the tower began ringing at that very moment. I began to tremble again while entering deep sobbing.

And something was dripping on my left shoulder. The blood of Christ on the cross? A message came to me and then all was silent. The three trees were transformed into three crosses.

I asked a question. My answer came when the bell rang first at Santa Maria del Sasso, then at Vico Morcote and then from across the lake in Italy from a chapel of a name I do not know. Three bells for my remaining doubt.



When I could, I kissed the ground again and turned to continue my climb in my somewhat frightened mental response to the message. A part of the ego structure had rebounded. It realized that “everything” might change and the ego was reasserting itself.

I made it to a rock outcrop close to the top. I climbed out upon the rocks and sat in silence meditating upon a glistening path of sunlight stretching

across the lake. My body had nothing more to resist with, but my mind did not stay quiet.

It was as difficult walking down as up. I was exhausted and the hillside is very steep. I detoured through a hillside cemetery above the church. I kissed the ground in certain places as if without choice. And, at one point a most beautiful angel peered out at me from the foliage over a grave. I don't believe I have ever seen such a soft sculpture.

I walked back to the hotel, down the cobbled walkways, in almost a measured, slow motion step, stopping, kneeling and kissing the earth. I never knew when the urge would come. It was as though I was reenacting some ancient ritual. Had this been my first day rather than my third, I would have been terribly self conscious or fearful of having lost my mind.

In fact, that is true in many ways. I lost my mind long enough to annihilate the self and see God through Christ's Passion. I have thought, since those first experiences, that I somehow entered

into the last days of Christ's life on earth. The reaction of one person at a Jesuit University was that part of the description of my second day matched that of English Mystic and anchoress Dame Julian of Norwich, whose revelations in the 1370's came after a life of prayer asking to feel the Passion.

The greatest challenge for me is not to explain these events, to seek acceptance of others or to relate them to the experiences of Mystics. It is to live life with the knowledge of these days and not to question God's timing for unfolding my life. As Gandhi once said, "My life is my message." I am living my life as best I can. The message is in my becoming.

I have heard a statement that the psyche represents the total universe in a condensed form. These experiences lend a bit of credence to that thought. My psyche expanded to commune with the Divine. Somehow, my mind transcended its normal limits and accessed some of the greatest wisdom ever recorded by mankind.