



Hello all. This is a special edition of the Spirituality of Gardening. I received a wonderful response to today's poem from a wonderful lady named Marty Webb who gave me permission to identify her and send you all the email that she sent me about what I wrote about the spirituality of gardening. I found it both lovely and enlightening and another step toward a better understanding of spirituality. I hope you agree. The painting is one of Isabelle's from Day 169 that I am recycling for this wonderful message. Enjoy and thank you Marty. And by the way, I also received another message from Joal Donavon about spirituality and connected words. She wrote of humility being connected to hummus – a lovely linkage to which she added humor and human, and God blowing the breath of life into a block of clay. Nice Joal, thanks. And with humility, I will leave you tonight. Blackburn.

Thank you, Jim! Spoken like a true non-gardener, and I do not say that in a mean spirited way. Gardening is, of course, as you relate, digging in the soil, the miracle of seeds etc. But as an 80 year old lifelong gardener, and the daughter/granddaughter of master gardeners and the wife (widowed) of a psychotherapist with whom I shared the intimacies of gardening, I would offer the following expansions of the spirituality of gardening:

* it's meditating as you survey your garden beds to decide what's most important to do that day: so you weed, deadhead, pot, water, prop up, encourage, commune with every plant in your garden, all the while giving thanks for your own life and ability to move so freely

*it's gardening side by side with the love of your life, in silent communion, for a whole Saturday or Sunday, even in the heat of the summer, shedding your filthy clothes in the laundry room, showering together, knowing that you've been making love in the garden together all day long

- *it's knowing your beloved is still by your side in the garden, urging you to feel his presence, even though he speaks to you from another dimension....and that in the blink of an eye, you will be together again
- *it's committing to plant only native plants which are both pollinator and host plant friendly for butterflies, bees and birds
- *it's learning about plants and committing to help individual species, such as Monarch butterflies, thrive through propagating/planting only native, not tropical varieties.
- *it's moving a plant multiple times in your garden until you find its PERFECT place in your garden where it thrives; the plant will tell you
- *it's thanking our creator god for the diversity and beauty of every living plant in your garden
- *it's walking out your back door to snip chives or parsley or basil or thyme for that new recipe
- *it's labeling your plants with garden stakes so your neighbors who admire the vast variety of flowering shrubs and plants can call them by name
- *it's celebrating mother nature's ABUNDANCE as you open a seed pod from a milkweed or a hyacinth bean or a bluebonnet and realize hundreds of seeds fall for every one to burst to life
- *it's creating beauty in your gardens MOSTLY for the neighbors
- *it's creating community as you work in your garden beds and neighbors who are walking by stop to visit and inquire about your gardens

Jim, I don't feel like I've done the spirituality of gardening justice in this meager list. I'll keep meditating.