



*peace be with you*  
weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler  
SAINT PAUL BENSON

*May 3, 2023*

## Dried Leaf

Dried Leaf is stressed  
feeling angry, helpless,  
overwhelmed, undeserving.

Then, in one  
momentary springtime  
visit to the urban woods

in particular  
an unannounced visit  
to this perfectly formed tree

a Sugar Tyme  
Crabapple, short branches  
whisking the troubled air

Creator's love  
forgiveness, and  
healing infused through fragile

fragrant blooms and  
stacks of twigs formed into  
simple home settled on branch's crook

*Continued*

## Psalm 31 A Psalm of David

<sup>31</sup> I run to you, God; I run for dear life.  
Don't let me down!

Take me seriously this time!

Get down on my level and listen,  
and please—no procrastination!

Your granite cave a hiding place,  
your high cliff nest a place of safety.

You're my cave to hide in,  
my cliff to climb.

Be my safe leader,  
be my true mountain guide.

Free me from hidden traps;  
I want to hide in you.

I've put my life in your hands.  
You won't drop me,  
you'll never let me down.

## Dried Leaf

Dried Leaf's groaning lament is transformed and will make something of this messed-up life

wholeness and peace  
gratefulness, and calm  
is found here in creation.

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Just a glance outside at the beautiful blooms and bright colors can brighten our day. However, when sadness overcomes us and the world seems grey even in springtime, there may be other things we can do to feel better. You may know someone whose personal Psalm may accurately be described in these words.

*“Have mercy on me, Lord, because I am depressed. My vision fails because of my grief, as do my spirit and my body. My life is consumed with sadness...”*

Recognizing that our entire lives are a journey of unknowing helps. As children we told ourselves (or may have been told) that we are unworthy of love, attention, or affection. Sharing with an empathetic listener and releasing false statements each day can help us enjoy and embrace life. Mary Mrozowski created the Welcoming Prayer practice that has been helpful to so many.

- *Begin by taking deep breaths and settling in.*
- *Without analyzing it, simply notice if you feel any tenseness or pain.*
- *Whether physical, emotional, or spiritual, welcome the Holy Spirit into what aches.*
- *When you are ready, let go of the pain, and embrace yourself and the world around you.*

In the poem above, “Dried Leaf” consents to the loving action of God, releases fears, and grows into the mystery of Jesus Christ. Life is seen through the eyes of a child. A spring in the step accompanying enjoyment is found. Let's all breathe in God's love and breathe out a smile!

We pray for you and the wholeness that comes through the love of Jesus Christ.

*Marta*

Rev. Marta Wheeler