



Journaling

Some people love to journal. For others ... it is definitely not their thing!

Spiritual journaling is not the same as keeping a diary. Nor is it writing for publication or posterity, although some journals have been published. But for most of us, journaling is something different. It is a way for us to open to God - to God's Spirit. It is a path for us toward wholeness and health.

God speaks to us in many ways, day in and day out. When we make a habit of journaling, we are more likely to notice those times - those "God winks" and nudges. As we note them down for ourselves, they are there for us to go back to and remember when, perhaps, we are having some doubts. So, daily (or at least periodically) asking ourselves "Where has God shown up lately?" and then writing the answer in our journals can be a very helpful spiritual discipline.

As we read or pray or participate in other spiritual activities, often we have insights - Aha! moments. Noting those in our journals can help us remember them and also help us to see patterns and pathways that are opening up for us.

When we are "stuck" in anger or fear or thoughts of revenge or feelings of persecution or abuse, writing about all this to God in our journal can be a huge help. Just getting those dark and roiling thoughts out of our heads and onto the page - into the light of day, the light of God - can be enormously helpful. It also makes it easier to see what is true about all that stuff and what isn't - where our minds may be "tricking us."

If you are one who journals regularly, I'm sure you can think of many other purposes for writing in your journal. I'd love to hear them!! But the key is to remember - this is a confidential space. You are not writing for others' approval or judgment. This is between you and God. Period. If you choose to share what is here with someone (for example, with your spiritual director), great! But that is purely your choice.

Keeping a journal need not be about writing only. I find that using lots of colors, drawing and painting, can help me express what words cannot. Have fun with your journal! Let your creativity flow (even if, like me, you swear you don't have a creative bone in your body!!).

My spiritual director introduced me to a little book by Jeri Gerding called [Drawing to God: Art as Prayer: Prayer as Art](#). I've often used the activity on Page 45 - The

Mandala. It's great fun and has shown me many insights. It's something like dream work!

Another cool book is Praying in Color: Drawing a New Path to God by Sybil MacBeth. You might give something like this a try!

Blessings on your time with God and your journal.

Priest Lynn Perkins
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Margie White is a practitioner of "The Morning Pages" from Julia Cameron's The Artist's Way. Cameron says, Morning Pages are "a valid form of meditation that give us insight and help us effect changes in our lives." As Margie describes it, "Simply, when you get up in the morning, you write three pages longhand (at least) and that's it. You are supposed to write three pages of gobbledygook, if nothing but gobbledygook is coming." The Morning Pages help free up the mind - it's a "brain drain." It can be a way to prepare for your meeting with God - or can actually BE the meeting place! As Margie goes on to say, "Mind you there are days and days when you are just writing about seemingly nothing, but somehow it awakens you."