A Note from the Prioress

By grace of the calendar I'm writing this in a week in which the fixed-date feast of the Visitation of Our Lady falls right between the moveable feasts of Holy Trinity and Corpus Christi. The Visitation leavens with warm immediacy these other two heady celebrations, whose sermons can sail high across the pulpit as high and out of reach as an errant frisbee in the wind.

It is indeed necessary to say that God is not a monolithic being of impenetrable power, turning toward us so smooth and reflective a surface that creatures can have no hope of access. We understand God as fundamentally relational, the source of all being who desires to be known and grasped so that—amazingly—we creatures may be lifted into the midst of that circle of Father, Son, and Spirit as participants in their one love. God fits us for this participation by feeding us with his own self in the Holy Eucharist. It's the encounter of Mary with Elizabeth that, in the feast of the Visitation, quite literally brings this movement home.

Jesus, who by the Holy Spirit indelibly joins heaven with earth, is there invisible in Mary's womb; he enlightens, animates and strengthens Elizabeth, John, and Mary to apprehend God's face turned toward them as limitless welcome, limitless liberation. In that revelatory moment these four are pressed toward each other, bound in salvation's one and continuing forward movement. The Visitation shows us how the work of love in community happens, instigated by Jesus, God-always-with-us. Thank you for accompanying us in community, and by these issues of Julian's Window and our prayers, allowing us to accompany you.

Yours in Jesus and Julian, M. Hilary, OJN

Prioress of the Order

The Order of Julian of Norwich is a contemplative Order of nuns of the Episcopal Church.

Our widespread community of Oblates and Associates, women and men of diverse Christian denominations, is committed to prayer, intercession, and conversion of life, supported by Julian's teaching of God's love for us in Christ Jesus.

Come and see!

www.orderofjulian.org

Julian's Window

Volume XVIII • June 2026 • No. 2

the newsletter of the Order of Julian of Norwich

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Community Notes

It seems a long time ago now, but winter finished with a 2-day blizzard and two small ice storms in April; fortunately we did not lose power until we had a thunderstorm later that month, which punctually took out our phone again. Warm weather came early, then delayed with cold weather and an attempt at snow during May.

The large work item this year is a deep energy retrofit of the old house, including insulation and windows. This means the guesthouse is closed through the rest of the year. We spent much of spring moving plants away from the foundation to prepare for digging, including cutting down the arbor vitae close to the house.

There were two animal visitors also close to the house: April is turkey season and late in

the month a tom attacked a basement window, thinking to scare off a rival. Both survived, though the window, like all our old windows, will be replaced this year. The other visitor was a porcupine, who was very curious about a glass door and astonished (and not very happy) when we opened it.

Our Julian Day forum this year included a reflection on the references in the *Revelations* to attention and what we do with it, summarized in one of the articles in this issue.

After some unexpected delays, General and Senior Chapters were held in late May. Following the end of her term as Prioress, Mthr Hilary was re-elected for another term.

As we write we anticipate Julianfest in June and the assembling of scaffolding on the house. With continued prayer for all of you, and gratitude for your ongoing support.

You were remembered in a novena of Masses for the feast of St Julian 8 May

This image is one of the oldest images of Julian, from the beginning of the 20th century. It was likely a window in St Julian's Norwich UK, and lost when the church was bombed in 1944. The banner is a Latin inscription of Psalm 34:5a, "Look upon Him and be radiant."

Clockwise from lower left: Cutting down a 19-foot arbor vitae • Part of the orchard in early spring • Apple tree in bloom • Plants being moved • A mallard pair at the spring in the woods

From the Refectory 2025-2026

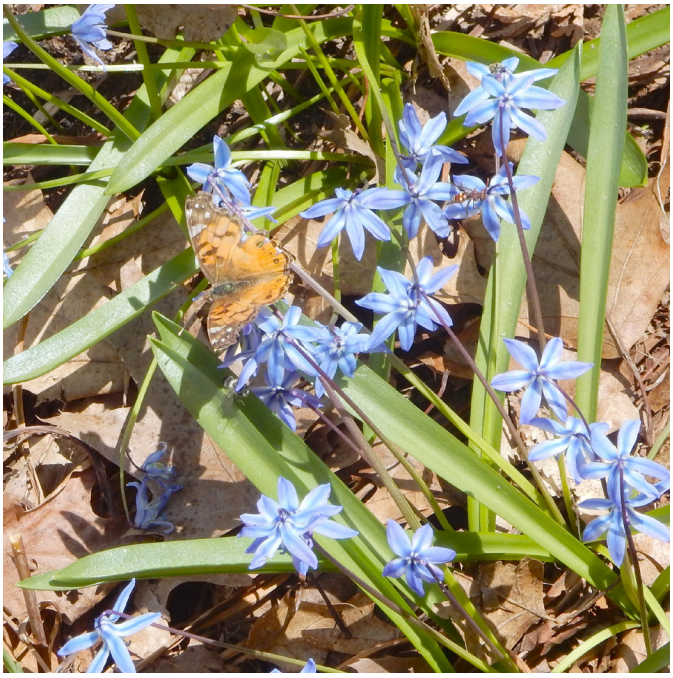
A Book of Silence	Sara Maitland
Oasis of Wisdom: The Worlds of the Desert Fathers & Mothers	David GR Keller
The Bird Way: A New Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, & Think	Jennifer Ackerman
One Fine Day: A Journey Through English Time	Ian Marchant

Think about these things

Julian was having a fine time enjoying a vision of God, when God reminded her she would sin, and she wasn't so much in a hurry to think about that. So then, "Our Lord very kindly waited and gave me grace to pay attention…"

This reminder of sin turned out to be about humankind in general, but there was a deeper point to it: awareness of our sinfulness is something that can never be left aside. Just as essential, it cannot be considered without recognition of our salvation and how God encloses us. These two are actually two aspects of the two judgments, the two truths, that God showed Julian in the revelations: in our sight we do not always stand, in God's sight we do not fail, and both are true, and the need to remember both is constant.

What we pay attention to—specifically, why we pay attention to something—is always the first step of our conversion, which needs to be constantly repeated, and our attention and what we do with it is something that Julian references several times in the *Revelations*.



Several times in the *Revelations* Julian refers to things God wants us to pay attention to. If you look closely at them all, not only are they all very similar or even repeated, but they are all united in their goal: to please God, to help us, and to help us become like Christ:

- to attend to God and rejoice in our Savior and our salvation (30, 36)
- to remain aware of our sinfulness, pay attention to God as our foundation and our help (39, 57, 78, 80, 82)
- to give our minds to love and humility (40)
- to consider any sin only with contrition, compassion, and true longing for God (76)
- to focus on God's promise of bliss and our deliverance from suffering (64)
- to pay attention to the Revelations, learn, and take strength from them (68)

These basic themes can be boiled down to these two aspects: remaining aware of our own sin with humility, contrition, and compassion; and to delight God by rejoicing in our safekeeping from the peril of sin, and our salvation with joy, love, and longing.

These two aspects are extremely important, because the fact is that how we pay attention to anything is just what we will become. How do we *look* at things? Is the way we look at things based on what they ask of us, or based on what we are inside? Do we pay attention to things with fear or anxiety, with desire for something, with anger about something? These are lenses that can distort both what we actually perceive, and also what we become. God wants us to instead put energy into the two lenses of our sinfulness and of our salvation, both at the same time. Whatever we then must pay attention to, we can remain open to receiving and giving Christ's presence.

St John Maximovitch noted that "Just as a basic concern is to be careful of anything that might be harmful to our physical health, so our spiritual concern should watch out for anything that might harm our spiritual life and the work of faith and salvation." He asks, where do our inner impulses come from? If we are moved, for instance, to read or talk about some person or incident, is it to be informed, or so that we might condemn, or gloat, or relate the matter to God? The choices we make and why we make them are nine tenths of the use of our attention.

Attention, in fact, can be a form of self-giving, and God is always attentive to us in love. At the end of the *Revelations*, Christ directs Julian to study the revelations she has received and derive strength from them, focusing on God's goodness, as she is also told: "Attend to me—I am enough for you—and rejoice in your Saviour and in your salvation."

Opening a gift is the first step

Mthr Hilary OJN

Read, mark, learn, inwardly digest; so we are told several times in the liturgical year to live in relation to the gift of these Gospels. Read, mark, learn, inwardly digest. Right away it's clear that the literacy we are being led to is not of the computational variety — where term A plus term B will infallibly result in term C, the answer to our particular question at any given time; or the GPS coordinates of our present location or our next destination.

Gospel literacy is more a thing of dietetics, creative art, psychology. It's the time-intensive, process-heavy alchemy by which our unique experience is marinated in these texts, is saturated and leavened. Then we hold our life up in the light of these texts and see that what is written there is revelatory of Jesus's life in us, working through us, transforming us ever so slowly into creatures that look like him.

Chapter 51 of the *Revelations* captures this perfectly: Julian is shown the little play of the lord and the servant, and while she understands it to be Jesus's gift to her of the answer to her burning question, it's not at all immediately clear how the given vision meets the felt and intellectual need. It's going to take time, and from this distance we know it will be years before the answer begins to resolve into clarity. The material of Julian herself was not immediately or completely ready. She herself had to undergo the marination process with that vision, the softening of spiritual tissues, the continual flow of particles through the brain and the blood and the heart until she was constitutionally ready to see it, also a gospel, the good news of Jesus to her, and to us.

So we give thanks for St Mark and his Gospel today, the good news of the life of Jesus given for us. This Gospel worked through Mark, and remade him in the image of Jesus so that he could, at the end of his life, mirror the end of Jesus's earthly life and reveal Jesus's costly glory, and his resurrection.