

## **The Sacredness of Nature** – Joyce Sasse

Can we understand the relationship of God and ourselves better through celebrating the gift of Creation? As human beings, we and the earth are intricately bound together. As we live in harmony with this common partner our lives are enriched.

Was this what Pope Francis was trying to say when he gave Donald Trump a special copy of his pastoral letter titled “Care for our Common Home”? Was this a plea to take the implications of climate change seriously.

Journalist Bruce Masterman has captured the essence of the human-and-nature relationship in his newly published book “One Last Cast”. Through his columns and short stories, he conveys “why” this relationship is so essential for our daily living.

In one story, when speaking to a group of individuals who are struggling with addictions and mental issues, he mentioned that he had his own journey with depression. Someone asked how he dealt with it. There were a few uneasy glances around the room when he responded “I self-medicate”. He quickly added “I prescribe myself generous doses of the outdoors when I’m feeling down. Being in nature helps level out my emotional peaks and valleys.”

Masterman’s expression of how he moved himself “into the light” is a great reminder for everyone. The older we get, the more excuses we have for staying entrenched in our easy chair, while the wonders of nature (part of God’s first revelation) beckon us to the health spa that is the great outdoors. Breathe deep and let the Spirit of the Divine touch your soul.

“One Last Cast”, a book for the whole family, will be in my pocket on Father’s Day so I can read the theme story. It’s about a dad and a daughter who have shared many special moments fishing together. Now she’s grown and ready to go to College. They have this one last day, this one last cast, before the rhythm of their lives radically changes.

That is my story! That’s the special, marvelous way my dad gifted me. He showed me why nature was a sacred place. “Care for it! It is part of who you are!”

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