

“All creation is a song of praise to God”
Contemplative Liturgy

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1151)



Hildegard’s old recipe for parsley wine heart tonic.
Combine one bottle of red wine with 8 to 10 stems of parsley.
Bring to a light boil. Stir in 2 tablespoons of wine vinegar. Gently
Boil for ten minutes. Stir in 1/3 to 3/4 cup honey. Strain, cool,
and rebottle.

Take 1 to 3 tablespoons daily. She says.....To relieve heart pain
(all levels), chest tightness , and other discomforts due to
weather or excitement. Take a half a cup for a good nights sleep.

Invitatory

Hildegard Litany of Her Life.

Today marks the German mystic Hildegard’s date of death on September 17, 1179 at 81 years of age.

At age 14 or 15 Hildegard took her vows as a nun following St Benedict’s Rule.

Hildegard published two volumes of visions from her life time of visions:

Scivias, or Know the Ways – her first book and Liber vitae meritorum (Book of life’s merits). – a vast number of **visions, liturgical songs and chants and**– the earliest liturgical morality play in existence **Ordo Virtutum**

These works were in part made possible due to Pope Eugenius III apostolic blessing and protections to Hildegard.

Following the guidance of a vision and in the face of great opposition at the age of 52 Hildegard and twenty nuns left their monastery and established

an independent

convent of women.

Hildegard wrote the first known medical journals.

The first, Physica (describes properties and medicinal uses of herbs, trees, stone, and the elements she was taught by tending her own garden and her deep connection with all of Creation.)

The second *Causae et curae* described diseases and their cures again she was educated by the deep listening to her own body and others).

In her early 60's she began traveling to preach in cathedrals and monasteries and was known for her many letters to the Bishops and Archbishops protesting abuses of the church.

In the last year of her life Hildegard continued to show her passion for God's justice. She refused to obey the Church's directive to exhume the body of an excommunicated man who was buried in the cemetery at her monastery. As a result the Church imposed an interdict on Hildegard and her community – denying communion – and forbidding the singing of the liturgy.

Hildegard argued, but obeyed the interdict. She refused to exhume the man's body. Finally, she wrote a letter describing music as humanity's bridge to the heavenly harmonies, which the Devil tries to silence because it is the highest form of adoration of God.

In March of 1179 the interdict was lifted. Hildegard died on September 17, five months later, at the age of 81.

*Using your imagination, place yourself in the quire of Hildegard's monastery.
Settled in to this space and listen for her voice.
First spoke in unison in English
And then sung in her Latin chant.*

O Virtus Sapientiae - O Moving Force of Wisdom

*O moving force of Wisdom, encircling the wheel of the cosmos,
Encompassing all that is, all that has life,
In one vast circle.
You have three wings: The first unfurls aloft
In the highest heights.
The second dips its way dripping sweat on the Earth.
Over, under, and through all things whirls the third.
Praise to you, O Wisdom, worthy of praise!*

The First Reading:

Hildegard wrote:

Our own inner wisdom "inner seeing" and "inner hearing" is a necessary part of the spiritual life and we need to trust it, even if our inner wisdom contradicts established rules and institutions.

In her revolutionary vision, Hildegard tells us that "...all the virtues threw down their earthly cares and discarded the texts of legal institutions. Instead, they looked inside themselves for true justice" (Vision Six, Scivias, 250).

For we cannot live in a world that is interpreted for us by others.

An interpreted life is not a home.

Part of the terror is to take back our own listening.

To use our own voice.
To see our own light.

Chant: *Art thou in the darkness*

The Second Reading

Hildegard gave name to the life force emanating from the creative womb of God as Veriditas. Its presence is the presence of God whom Hildegard heard speaking in these words:

R Craine. 1998. Hildegard.

I am the breeze that nurtures all things green.
I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits,
I am the rain coming from the dew that causes
the grasses to laugh with the joy of life (1985:33).

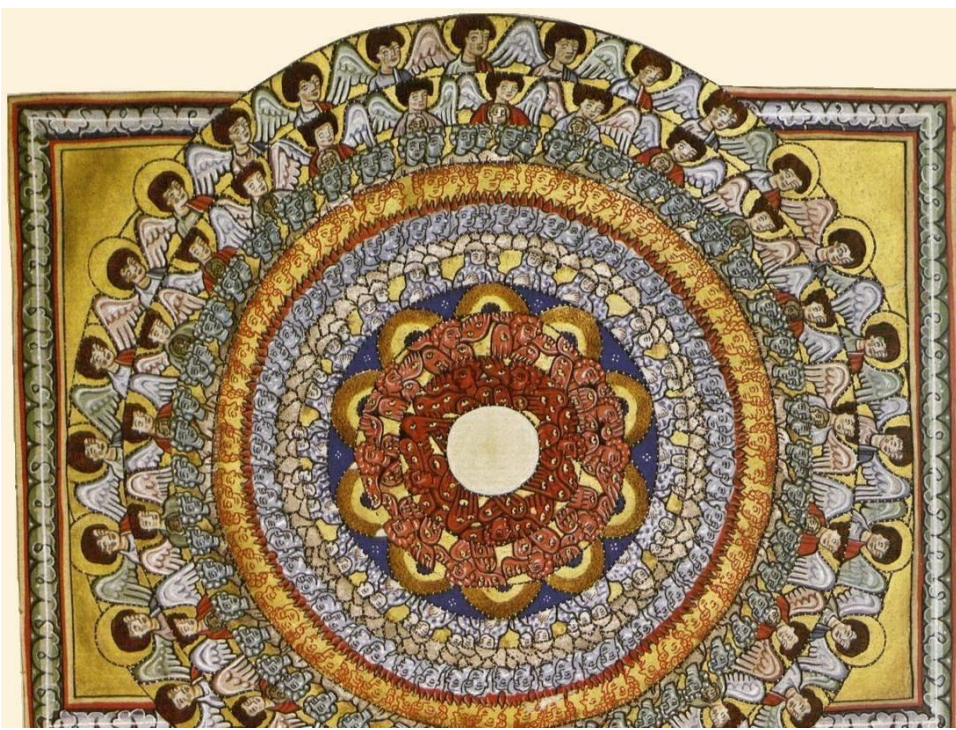
Translation: Matthew Fox' (1985).

The greening life-force (viriditas) has weakened because of the ungodly erring of human souls" yet, says Hildegard, the nature of God, through whom "the fountain-fullness of the Word came the embrace of God's maternal love, nourishes us into life, is our help in perils, and—as a most profound and gentle love—opens us for repentance" (Scrivas, II, 2, 4).

Hildegard "believes Christ brings lush greenness to shriveled and wilted people" (1985:30). And this is the main activity of the Word—viriditas.

Chant - The Earth is Full (Darlene Franz)

Silence :Let us enter into 10 minutes of silence.



Let us now add our murmured prayers with the whole host of heaven. You are invited to unmute yourself and in the 7 minutes of prayer voice the contents of your heart. Feel free to repeat prayers and silence is also a form of prayer. Let us pray for the Whole Cosmos.

A Closing Prayer

*But I am always filled with a trembling fear,
as I do not know for certain any single capacity in me.
Yet I stretch out my hands to God,
so that, like a feather which lacks all weight and strength and flies through the wind,
I may be borne up by God.*

The Closing Chant

*Only the Divine Matters
And Because the Divine Matters
Everything Matters.*

+Thomas Keating

+Music Susan J. Latimer