

Creative Writing as a Ministry – January 8th 10:45am

Psalm 96 Verses 1-3

Sing a new song to the Lord!

Let the whole earth sing to the Lord!

Sing to the Lord; Praise his name.

Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.

Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.

Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.

A Writer's Prayer – from the Catholic Writer's Guild

Holy Family, Guide our minds, our hearts, our hands as we write, speak, illustrate – help our words to live in union with the Word. Teach us discipline and skill to use the talents God gives us. Give us also insight and courage to convey God's love through our craft, and humility to be open to His divine will, shaping our lives, in loving loyalty to His Church.

In Christ's name, Amen.

Where it started for me

Creative Writing Ministry in action – as a group or individually

Why writing

- We all have a desire for stories; everyone loves storytelling whether telling them or hearing them.
- We do it from the time we are children; teachers use stories in school to teach and inspire imagination, parents read stories to us at night before bed when we are children to calm and sooth.
- Creative writing helps us dream, think, and create – they stimulate our thoughts and can impact our actions and those of others.
- We pass our stories from one generation to another. A gift for our children and grandchildren. Our stories share our ideas, values, and beliefs in some cases they might not be ready to hear now, but they will have it to read later.

- Jesus used parables to teach us – these are the greatest stories of all. “The good Samaritan” “Prodigal Son” – think about how powerful these teachings are.
 - God has called us to pray without ceasing, use our talents, and to evangelize. Prayer is not enough – we must look for new approaches for Christian messaging for both believers and non-believers.
 - We can do this through our writing whether your audience is your child, grandchild or a large audience.
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- Writing is our testament of faith – we give testimony by how we live our lives. Memoire writing shares this with others. Our stories of where God has shown up in our lives is our testament to truth – it can inspire others.
- Writing can be healing – a powerful way to work through grief, loss, or difficulties.
- Even if you write and never share it, writing can help you explore your faith and bring you closer to God – take notes as you read a spiritual work or pray – reflect back later. Meditate on your thoughts.

Types of writing: Memoire, poetry, lyrics, fiction, fantasy, devotionals, fairy tales, journaling, movie review. Anything – can be spiritual or not, but should reflect Catholic values.

Why as a group?

Beauty brings us to God. This is our gift – we want it to be our best. By reading and sharing our work with others, we can gain valuable feedback, not just in fellowship but also to improve our writing. We can learn from each other.

Just a Few Tips:

- Be still. Pray. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you.
- Is there a message you want to give? Who is your audience?
- Begin with paper and pencil. If using your computer, turn OFF the edit features – write with emotion / revise with calm.

- Create a special place for writing – a corner, a favorite comfortable chair. Consider soft, gentle lighting, be away from distractions, add beauty (like a plant). Add minimalist background music like soft guitar.
 - Write every day – try to write the same time every day so it becomes a habit – but you don't have to.
 - Join a writer's group – there are some at local libraries and bookshops – some online.
 - Use prompts if needed – you can find them online or in books just for that.
 - Explore the use of writing exercises to stimulate your imagination and creativity.
 - Carry small notebook with you or use your phone and record ideas as you get them – don't wait to write them down.
 - Before writing consider taking a walk, sit in a garden, or spend time with those things that inspire you. This quiets your mind and opens it up to creativity. You need quiet to be reflective. You need to hear your thoughts and imagination.
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Some Prompts to Get You Started:

- Write about your favorite saint – explain who they are and why you chose them.
- I'm grateful for ... – pick one thing, place, or person and explain why.
- The beauty that surrounds me ... – be descriptive – use your five senses.
- A knock on the door ... – use your imagination and tell us if you open it, who is it, what happens?

Remember:

- We demonstrate our faith in Christ by how we live our lives – we can share this faith through writing. Catholic creative writing doesn't need to

mention Jesus or quote scripture, but it can. If you do quote scripture – get it right.

- Pray. Don't wait for inspiration, write something. Write often. Persevere. Perfect your skill. Read often. Readers make great writers.
- We need more writing that tells our story and shares our values. Creative writing can engage others in knowing our truth. *Sometimes you have to write a piece to meet an audience where they are or else they won't find it interesting enough to read. If they don't read it now, they might later :-D*

Whether you write with a group or on your own, WRITE!

Share the stories of how God touches your life. Share your passion for our faith.

Be a light of our Lord's love and mercy for us all.

He Spoke to Me by Karen Kier

He spoke to me, in private prayer
His breath, a balmy breeze in air.
Here he was in nature's wood,
His patient presence, I understood.
Luminous light through shadowy skies,
Deer and bear on guard nearby.
Clouds fast forming overhead,
By peaceful path, I'd been lovingly led.

"Lift up your heart," He called to me.
"Let your soul shine, for all to see.
Life here is short, yet lingers long.
Love One Another be your daily song."

And then skies cleared, clouds broke away.
My heart like the sun, burst open that day.
My mornings now, I continue to pray
That all the world would know His way.

