



“Apple Blossom Sunday” is a big deal around here! Never heard of it? Well, you probably won't find it in any official church calendar but don't let that bother you.

We start out alone near one of our old apple trees and see if we can hear a haiku on the breeze. When it comes to haiku we are pretty simple and old-fashioned, 5-7-5 and all that. We would probably be an embarrassment to the average literary haiku society. To us it

is a spiritual tool. (It is certainly not necessary, but if you want to learn more [click here.](#))

After a while someone rings the big bell, that a ship's captain brought us many years ago, and we stop writing and gather at the chapel. There are appropriate songs and readings but no homily. Instead we share the haiku we have collected.

In these days of battling theologies it is interesting that the simplest aspects of nature can often provide common ground. Ellen Gould White (1827–1948) founded a very conservative Protestant denomination. She spent her last years in a neighboring county where she observed, “*God is Love* is written upon every opening bud!” I think she would have fit right in on Apple Blossom Sunday. As would have the Catholic novelist Flannery O’Conner (1925–1964) who loved peacocks and wrote things like, “... he saw Jesus move from tree to tree in the back of his mind, a wild ragged figure...” And, we might as well bring in one of America’s most prominent “none-of-the-aboves”, Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) for the apple tree had the place of honor in her Amherst garden.

T.S. Eliot called April “the cruelest month.” I don’t feel that way even though, like almost everyone else I know, we here have had serious troubles in April. Our little Tina died on the 9th in 1991. There has been: Abraham Lincoln – April 14th, Martin Luther King – April 4th, Columbine High School – April 16th, and the Boston Marathon – April 15. We will never forget those and so many other April deaths, including a gentle person executed by Romans on a hillside outside of Jerusalem centuries ago.

For me April is a time for mending. Which is perhaps why I see these Apple blossoms as healing balm.

*Like quiet snowflakes
the white apple blossoms drift
on the April breeze.*

Brother Toby

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