



*A 1920 cross-stitch by 16 year-old Viola Pecquet*

The lavender around the chapel is in full bloom. Soon it will be harvested and shared with others in various ways. But as for now, I have the wonderful experience of sitting where I can see and smell these wondrous plants!

Now right here is where the medieval mystic would say that he or she fell asleep from the peaceful intoxication of the lavender and

then there came a miraculous vision. But a person simply can't get away with that sort of thing today — even when it's true.

For various reasons, I have been thinking about young people who became overwhelmed by some event. Perhaps it was a mistake on their part that turned into something big. Perhaps it was a brutal insensitivity by someone they had once trusted. Perhaps it was simply living in a society where hurtful things can be disseminated at a frightfully fast pace. The problem may be growing faster than a young person's ability to find a solution and suicide becomes an option.

Just suppose that I did fall asleep and that I did have a dream. Here was this 14-year-old girl collecting lavender and looking at me. I'm sure we have met before. Many times in fact. I remember — it's Anne Frank! The look on her face says, “What are you worried about now?” So I asked, “What would you say to a girl your age who no longer had the strength to battle life's sorrows?” Silently, she took her diary from her pocket, found the page and pointed to a paragraph. I read it:

*The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature, and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, I know that then there will always be comfort for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles.*

Then, just suppose, I woke up and found a little bundle of lavender in my lap. And also, just suppose, I remembered that Wednesday was Anne's birthday.

Can we, by example, gently guide the young people of our time into a simpler world that transcends the high-speed digital realities in which they live? A place where we and they can feel that "all is as it should be"? It might surprise you to know that you are probably already doing that.

Isn't Lavender a remarkable plant?

## ***Brother Toby***

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Starcross Community, [www.starcross.org](http://www.starcross.org), [community@starcross.org](mailto:community@starcross.org), 707-886-1919