

# Connecting New

April, 2025

This past month a woman to whom I had been providing spiritual direction died. She was 94. I share two poems below in her honor.

We met in 2017. She often recounted the story of our first retreat together, how when everyone was at the opening gathering, before any of the retreatants knew who their spiritual companion would be, she scanned the room and secretly knew that she wanted to be matched with me. From my perspective, we were paired due to a logistical reason, something like she had indicated on her registration form that she needed scheduling flexibility, and it just happened that I was the only companion who could accommodate that. That's how God works.

Over the years, she participated in every retreat that was offered within driving distance, and always requested that I be her companion. I was privileged to accommodate her request. Continuing further, as the pandemic stimulated virtual participation in our retreats, she engaged in that way. Even though she had a computer, she used it solely to play solitaire, so we met via phone. Eventually, she asked if I would meet with her for spiritual direction on an ongoing basis, which I agreed to do. We met via phone once a month for about an hour, and both of us benefited from and enjoyed our conversations very much. The last time we met was in March.

I also want to communicate that in my experience, even though the entire focus of spiritual direction is on the directee and their relationship with God, spiritual development, etc., the spiritual director benefits as well. Our directees reveal God to us. God sends us people to companion who will help us grow as directors. I am very grateful for all the people who have trusted me to companion them and for the fruit that has come from sharing these journeys.

Sitters

we have sat together often  
over many years  
listening  
my teacher  
my mother  
my sister  
my friend  
my student  
my wisdom figure  
and each time is gift

each time is blessed  
and we are grateful

Margie

Margie died this morning.  
She was ready.  
She had been ready for years.  
Lived a full life by any measure.  
She knew how to smile and shared it freely.

Dear Margie, now you know, now you are  
what we wondered about together many times...  
what is on the other side (assuming sides exist)  
of this life.  
And I am as sure that God loves us  
that you are smiling as big as ever.

May we continue to share our sacred journeys together.

Peace and Blessings,  
Clarence

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