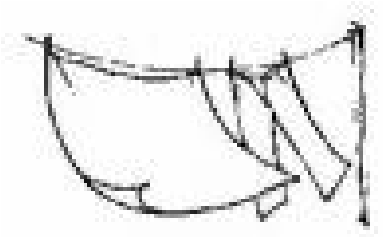
NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Wind and Fire

Pat Marrin | Jun. 1, 2009 NCR Today



The late spring burst of sunshine made it possible to hang out the laundry this weekend. Clotheslines long ago lost out to convenient dryers and were even banned in some neighborhood covenants as unsightly. But they are coming back as both environmentally friendly and energy saving habits. Perhaps the recession is reminding us of simpler times, childhood memories of the billow and snap of sheets in every backyard, a place to run and hide among the rows of bed sheets or the chance to pretend you had been impressed to serve in the ropes of a block-long British man-of-war commanded by stay-at-home moms.

This not-unpleasant task of hanging the laundry makes labor into am approved contemplative escape. The light breeze and warm sunshine do the work for you. Wind and fire come free of charge and have their effect slowly and naturally.

The truly great occasions, like the founding of a nation or the birth of a church, are measured not in visible force or sudden power but in the gradual pervasive patterns that underlie cultural change. The world is run not by presidential decree or papal proclamations but by all the people who get up every Monday morning, get their kids to school, show up for work.

Pentecost is like this. God did what every parent does, emptied the divine life into Jesus, who, in turn, emptied his life into us. We extend the mystery by emptying ourselves into others. This kenosis is the pattern of all of creation. The sun is giving itself away in leaping thermonuclear donations that make life possible on earth, and in the process dry my laundry on the line. We share the flow when we rise to the occasion in a hundred ordinary tasks that hold together the multiple patterns we call our shared existence.

Source URL (retrieved on *10/06/2015 - 20:04*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/wind-and-fire