

## One of God's Gifts

Michael Sean Winters | Jun. 21, 2011 | Distinctly Catholic

I am up here in Connecticut for a fortnight while the bathroom at my home in DC is gutted and rebuilt. Summertime in New England is one of God's special gifts to humankind. I am biased, of course, having grown up here. But, last night, I took my Dad for dinner at Skipper's Dock, a restaurant which, as the name suggests, sits astride a dock in Stonington harbor. In the distance, you can see Fisher's Island and countless sailboats plying the waters of Long Island Sound. A fishing trawler came into the harbor while we had the fresh whole belly clams. A sailboat headed out as we downed the lobster. The sun set across the harbor. A cool breeze blew. Life does not get much better.

My home is in the Northeast corner of the state, which is called the "Quiet Corner." If you look at a photo of the Northeastern seaboard taken from space, there is a dense patch of light from Boston to DC, except for one little patch. That is the Quiet Corner. My hometown still has no need of a single traffic signal. We have a General Store, an auto mechanic, a plant shop, and that is about it for commerce. The village green has a white clapboard church and a bunch of white clap board homes. It looks like a postcard.

This morning, I made a walk in the Goodwin State Forest which is only about a half mile down the road from my home. It has hundreds of acres of woodlands and wetlands, with walking trails throughout, surrounding a mile-long pond half-covered in water lilies. A beaver dam is protruding from the water in Marsh Pond, a smaller pond along one of the trails.

My mother's gardens are, since my mother died, always in need of much weeding when I arrive. They are filled with old perennials that you can't find at a garden store anymore, so beautiful and elegant they take your breath away. Unfortunately, the chleome, a self-sowing annual I planted last year, did not survive the harsh winter and I must get some more. But the lupine, which does not grow in DC, is glorious and there is a variety of columbine in my mother's garden I have never seen before, much smaller and more delicate than the varieties you can purchase today, more like the wild columbine you find in the woods.

In the next few days, provided my computer can get fixed, I will include some links to my favorite places to go in this part of Connecticut. It is worth a visit. In a noisy world, you will find quiet here.

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