

*THOUGHTFUL
REFLECTIONS*

FROM THE WORLD AROUND US

Dorothy Gonick

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*Written and illustrated by
Dorothy Gonick
March 2011*

LENTEN REFLECTIONS

Lent is often thought of as a time of darkness. Perhaps we should see it as a period where God's Light shines on our dark ways—letting it illuminate those habits that need reforming and letting His light and Love help us to re-form our thoughts, deeds and desires. A time to resist telling God what we want Him to do and ask Him to shine His light and love to re-form our hearts and clear away the dark areas.

Often God uses nature to speak to us and we can take inspiration from qualities of the world around us.

Wishing you a joyful Easter!

Dorothy Gonick

CONTENTS

<i>Bamboo</i>	1
<i>Carnations</i>	2
<i>Chrysanthemums</i> ...	3
<i>Dandelions</i>	4
<i>Grasses</i>	5
<i>Grapes</i>	6
<i>Holly</i>	7
<i>Iris</i>	8
<i>Lilac</i>	9
<i>Lotus</i>	10
<i>Morning Glory</i>	11
<i>Pine Tree</i>	12
<i>Psalm 9:11</i>	13
<i>Roots and Bulbs</i> ...	14
<i>Roses</i>	15
<i>Snow flakes</i>	16
<i>Song Birds</i>	17
<i>Spring Bulbs</i>	18
<i>Sunflowers</i>	19
<i>The Sun</i>	20
<i>Vegetable Soup</i> ...	21
<i>Wild Orchids</i>	22
<i>Wisteria</i>	23
<i>Zinnias</i>	24

BAMBOO



As Bamboo becomes used in multiple ways; itself to become an instrument of food, buildings, utensils, protection, recreation, beauty---help us to be willing to be used wherever we may fill a need.

Rejoice in all that ye put your hand onto. Deut. 12:7

CARNATIONS



*When we feel as frazzled as a
Carnation blossom looks, we can think of
and focus on its fragrance and long-lasting
bloom, and be refreshed.*

*Cast thy burdens upon the Lord, and
He shall sustain thee. Psalm 66:22*

CHRYSANTHEMUMS



As Chrysanthemums branch out from repeated pruning to bloom abundantly in the fall season, help us Lord, to look for good when we feel that our plans have been thwarted. May we live by your example.

*Ye shall seek me and find me.
Jeremiah 29:1*

DANDELION

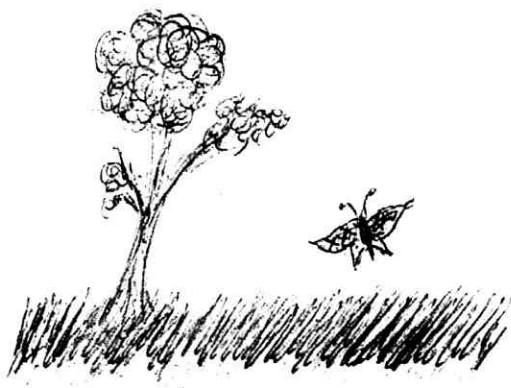


*When failure seems our lot, think of
the dandelion. Its deep root survives to grow
again, with a cheerful bloom.*

*Is our faith as deeply rooted?
Try, try again.*

He will guide thee into all truth. John 16:13

GRASSES



As grasses of the field are content to be without showy blooms; may we be content with days of routine, trusting that we are fulfilling our purpose for this time in our lives.

Wherefore if God so clothes the grass of the field, Shall he not so much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Matthew 6:30

GRAPES



*When feeling crushed by life's
circumstances, reflect on the grapes that
undergo crushing to become sweet wine.
We pray, "Thy will be done."*

*God is our refuge and strength, a very
present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1*

HOLLY



One December I broke off a sprig of holly and placed it in a vase of water. Days later I noticed tiny white blossoms opening near the tips. These developed into hard green berries that held promise of ripening into the red fruits of the holly.

There are times in our lives when we are separated and cut from that which we draw our sustenance. With God's help we can choose not to wither, but to rely on God's living water.

*We love Him because he first loved us.
1 John 4:19*

IRIS

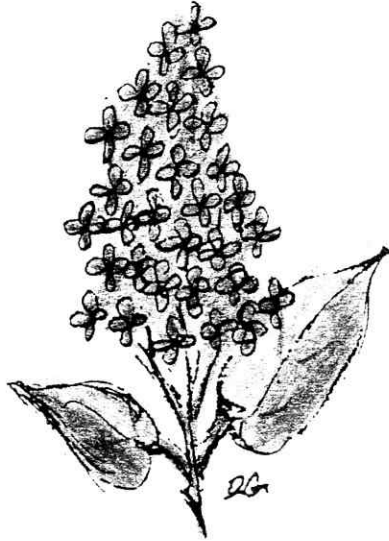


Three graceful petals of the Iris open out to the world and three petals curl inward as if to shelter its tender heart. Beneath is a sturdy stem and flaring wands of foliage.

As we mingle with others, Lord, help us to be bearers of peace and love.

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on Thee. Isaiah 26:3*

LILAC



What makes the lilac so lovely and fragrant? Many individual florets clustered together, blending their beauty into a lovely, fragrant bloom. Each floret needing the support of other florets to become a complete blossom.

We all have needs and the need to be needed.

*The Lord is the strength of my life.
Psalm 27:1*

LOTUS



*We admire the lovely Lotus blossom
recalling that it once had been a seed buried
in mud at the bottom of the lake.*

*Rather than succumb to a situation
that may cause bitterness and humiliation in
very stressful times of life, we will find
nourishment (as the Lotus does) and rise up
through the cleansing waters of God's love
to become as beautiful as the fragrant Lotus.*

*O Lord how manifold are thy works!
Psalm 104:24*

MORNING GLORY



*As it unfolds its trumpet-like petals,
The Morning Glory reminds us to
greet each day with joy and expectation. To
start each day welcoming the Lord and
asking His blessing on all that we do and
think. Then at the end of the day to fold our
hands as the morning glory folds its petals;
thanking our Lord for each of the blessings
He has bestowed.*

*The Lord will give thee grace and glory.
Psalm 84:11*

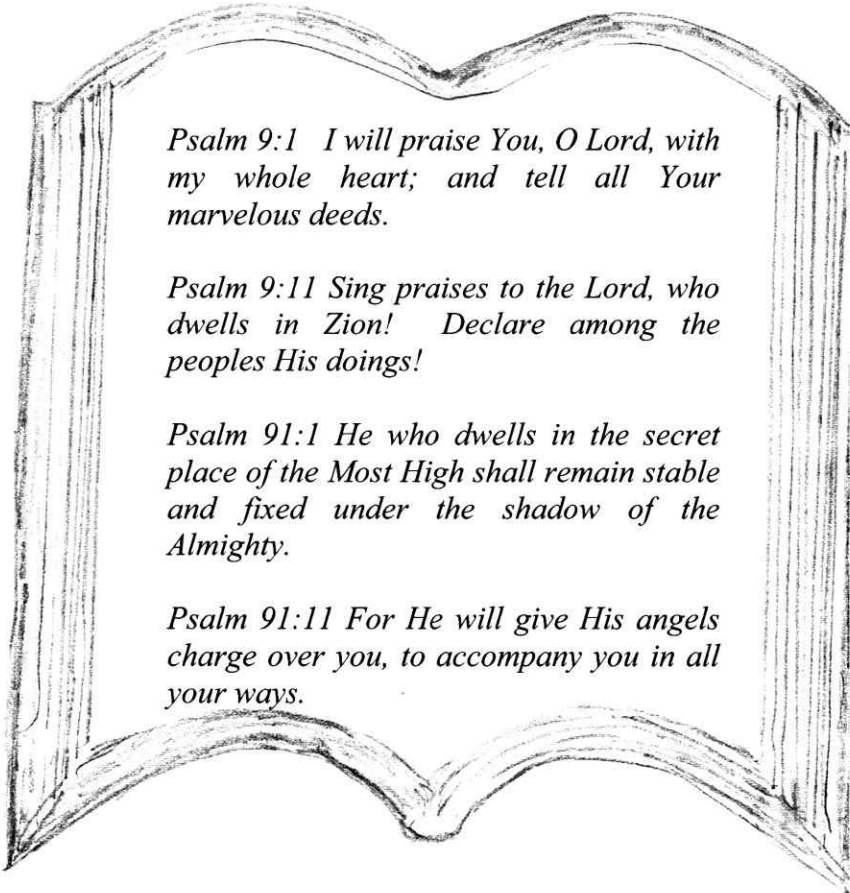
PINE TREE



As Pine trees rid themselves of old branches, help us Lord, to rid ourselves of useless worries that drain us of strength for daily life.

*They that wait upon the Lord shall
renew their strength. Isaiah 40:3*

When assailed with sleeplessness and worry, try dialing these scriptures for help. God is listening and will answer, because He cares for you.



Psalm 9:1 I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; and tell all Your marvelous deeds.

Psalm 9:11 Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare among the peoples His doings!

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty.

Psalm 91:11 For He will give His angels charge over you, to accompany you in all your ways.

ROOTS and BULBS



*There are times that seem uneventful
and of winter darkness when our hearts are
bleak; yet through it all we can trust our
roots in Christ to anchor us and hold the
flame of life ready to ignite and live again
from dark times into sunshine.*

*To everything there is a season, and a
time to every purpose under heaven.
Ecclesiastes 3:1*

ROSE

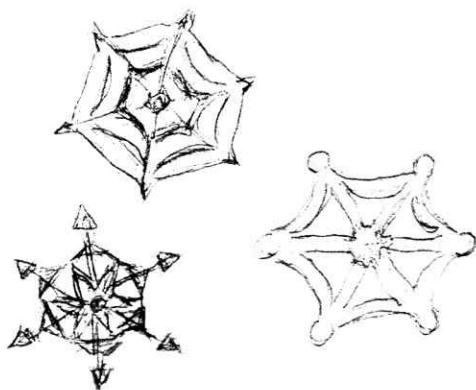


The rose that rises above its thorny branch in splendor of beauty and fragrance has become a symbol of love.

As Christ poured forth love while crowned with thorns, help us rise above the thorny times in our lives with a heart of love and be glad that thorn bushes can bear roses.

*The fruit of the Spirit is love.
Galations 5:22*

SNOWFLAKES



*As snowflakes gather in a drift and
meld together in pristine beauty, let us
celebrate our uniqueness by allowing others
to grow in their own unique way, forming a
community of diversity and unity.*

*Freely ye have received, freely give.
Matthew 10:8*

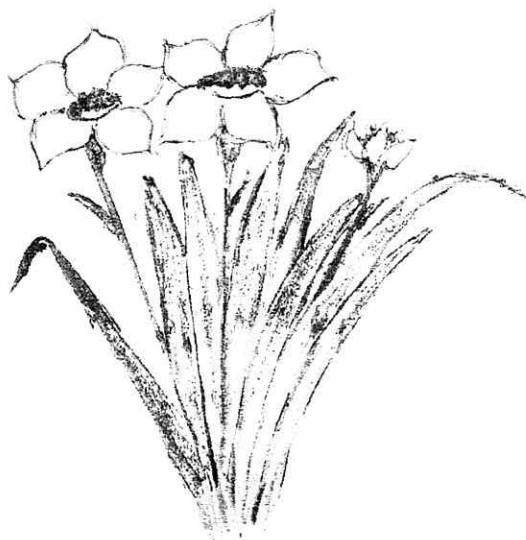
SONGBIRDS



When our world seems inhospitable and cold, may we recall the cheeriness of the winter birds as they visit our bird feeders. May we be willing to touch the lives of others who are experiencing a 'winter' in their lives.

*The joy of the Lord is your strength.
Nehemiah 8:10*

SPRING BULBS



Lord, the leaves of spring bulbs break through the cold, hard earth that has held them through the long winter of dormancy.

May we have the courage to break through any hardness of heart, any discouragement, or any cause for discomfort of soul. With Your help may we rise to new life and growth to bloom with fragrance and beauty as the spring bulbs do.

He restoreth my soul. Psalm 32:3

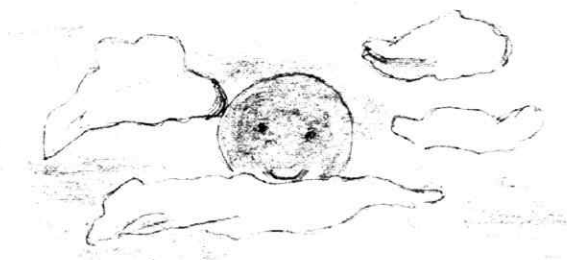
SUNFLOWER



*As the sunflower turns its face to
follow the sun, may we keep our eyes on
Your Son as our source of life.*

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and
a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105*

THE SUN

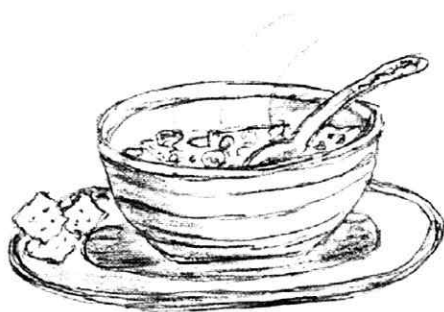


God created the vast galaxies and the stars. Our Star may be one of the smallest, yet it shines brightly and gives us light and warmth.

When we feel insignificant we can remember that we are of much importance in the eyes of God. He is still mindful of our needs and gives us help and comfort when we turn to Him.

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:16*

VEGETABLE SOUP



Feeling neglected? Reflect on a vegetable that is not in each spoonful....its flavor permeates the whole bowl of soup. Just as each person in a group 'flavors' the gathering, even when silent.

*I the Lord...will hold thine hand,
and will keep thee. Isaiah 42.6*

WILD ORCHID



The fragrant Wild Orchid blossoms in the wild, often unobserved. It recovers quickly after a storm, lifting its blooms afresh.

Lord, we hope to greet each day with the joy of being who we are and the willingness to lighten lives of others in whatever way we can.

Be ye kind to one another. Ephesians 4:32

WISTERIA



When newly sprouted, a wisteria plant will grow along the ground searching for a support on which to cling because it lacks sturdiness to grow upright. Its persistence is rewarded with delicate blossoms.

We can rely on our Savior Jesus as our support and guide. Clinging to Jesus gives us strength as it gives Him joy.

*Casting all your cares upon him; for
he careth for you. 1 Peter 5:7*

ZINNIAS



When recovering from medical trauma or other misfortune, we can think of the sturdy, sprightly Zinnias. After repeated cuttings, new buds will form to bloom into bright cheerful flowers.

Be renewed.

He restoreth my soul....surely goodness and mercy shall follow me... Psalm 23

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Written and Illustrated by
Dorothy Gonick
Hinsdale, MA 01235
Phone 413-655-2944