

Tuesday - February 23

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit

John 12:24 (NRSV)

Hollyhocks grew along my grandmother's garden fence. As a young girl, I loved how tall they grew. I loved the brightly colored trumpet-like flowers and delighted in turning the petals and buds into beautifully dressed dolls. As a grandmother, I wanted a garden of hollyhocks. I imagined them growing in front of a small fence hiding the utility boxes in our current yard. I bought seeds and planted them. Nothing grew. A second year I bought seeds and planted them. They grew, but only a few inches tall. A third year a few plants reemerged. I transplanted them. I watered them. I tenderly cared for them. They started to grow. I was thrilled! And, then the rabbits found them to be delicious. When I saw rabbits nibbling, I chased them away but I couldn't stand guard all day and all night, so I repeatedly sprayed the hollyhock remnants with a repellent. But still, the rabbits came to feast and before long, nothing was left but hollyhock stubs, my anger with the rabbits, my disappointment and whatever lays beneath the ground.

The hollyhocks are a reminder to me of something that I have been learning for most of my life. Having what I want is not always possible. Accepting what cannot be changed, doing what I can to make a difference when and where I can, living in hope and trusting in God's provident grace is the way of life.

Sandy

Prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardships as the pathway to peace...." Amen. (Excerpted from the Serenity Prayer)

