



Slowing Time: Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door

Barbara Mahany

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Barbara Mahany believes the sacred is all around, within finger's reach--here to be gathered, culled, collected, through the simple yet complex art of paying attention, of savoring the moment, of cultivating stillness. Making room for the God and illuminating the Godly specks in the everyday. Noticing the seen, revealing the unseen, and pinpointing the divine in both. The book sifts through the terrain of three particular landscapes where the author most often encounters the stirrings of the Divine: under heaven's dome; on the front lines of the homefront; and in the unspooling of the seasons. The most essential prayer, often, is the life closely examined, held up to the light. By probing deeply the nooks and crannies of the home-front, the author points out that the reader need not venture far to find what matters most. And the questions stirred will linger, long after the page is turned.

Slowing Time: Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door Details

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From Reader Review Slowing Time: Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door for online ebook

Leah says

In this juncture of my own journey in faith, I don't need another creed, another confession, another article of faith, but I do need techniques and suggestions to bring those convictions into my every days. Like almost everyone, I need to learn to slow time, or at very least, to savor, appreciate, and fully live into every moment, rather than looking backwards or forwards?as important as those perspectives are.

Barbara Mahany's Slowing Time is a lovely, love-filled journal of seasonal nature and spirituality; she emphasizes how the church's liturgical year of grace and the Jewish festivals both have deep roots in earth and sky. Reflecting upon astronomical and meteorological seasons, she opens each new seasonal section with a lilting description of the literal nature of sun, shadows, light and dark at each solstice or equinox. Subtitle, "Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door" hints at Mahany's emphasis on perceiving with all your senses, not solely with the one of our five senses most engaged in a particular activity. A special recipe for each season, as well! I'm not majorly a meat-eater, but I'd love to try Beef Stew with Pomegranate Seeds Nestled beside Aromatic Rice; I've made something similar to Christmas Eve Elves' French Toast in the oven, and when I live with a working oven again, it will be time to bake that specialty again. Need I even mention summertime Blueberry Slump?! You know I'm a pushover for berries and for serving any dessert with vanilla ice cream! I like Rolled Cut-Out Cookies' ingredients, but definitely prefer chewy, soft, bar-type cookies to crispy ones.

Probably because it's mid-November, I love how Slowing Time begins with Winter as a "Season of Deepening" and ends with Winter as "Season of Stillness." Note: Amazon Vine sent me an uncorrected Advance Reader's Copy, and I'm going by the index, rather than by the actual section titles, both of which list Winter as "Deepening."

I've enjoyed peaking into the author's days and seasons along with her anecdotal reports. She gives us a "Count Your Blessings Calendar" for each season, and I've already started trying to blog blessings each week with my "week of grace" posts. Although I intend to keep Slowing Time the book, to reread it, and possibly loan it out (and hope to get it back), for me it's best as a model for journaling or blogging. As computer-intensive as my days have become, and despite my aversion to journaling in anything but a basic 70-page lined spiral bound notebook, in order to Slow Time I easily can imagine writing and drawing in one of those lovely journal books, maybe even making "field notes" along the the bottom of each page like a stream of news ticker, just as Barbara has done. Although the author lives in Wilmette, Illinois, I find it fascinating that reading Slowing Time gives little indication of a rural, urban, or suburban setting. In other words, these activities and observations can happen anywhere, so go chronicle your own experiences Slowing Time! Please? I'm going to do just that!

Julia says

beautiful read if you want to take time to breathe in the sacred.

sosser says

my friend wrote this lovely book of essays from the heart. they tell a story of how she pays deep down close attention to the beauty all around thru the seasons of the year. you might want to give a stack away as holiday gifts to everyone you love.

Sarah says

I just loved Mahany's writing! This was an excellent read and one that I hope to someday own.

Yong Zhen Chua says

Warning sign 1: Author is Catholic. Warning sign 2: Author is Catholic married to a Jewish in an interfaith union. Do not proceed if you are looking for a theologically sound, biblically-focused and gospel-rich piece.

Holiness is found in the little objects around our daily lives (not in us as we work towards sanctification with the knowledge of our identify in Jesus Christ). We say prayers to the sun, moon, stars, snow, and other things of nature (and not to God, our Heavenly Father). The author even makes references outside her main faith backgrounds and alludes to them being sacred.

Being a mainline Protestant, reading this book churns my stomach as I see how the author more often than not slides into mysticism and pantheism to describe her spirituality as she relates her view of time and everyday tasks.

It is reasonable to type this book as “spiritualistic mindfulness”, but do not mistaken this as legitimate material for the serious Christian grounded in the Word of God. Read with caution if you intend to use this as Christian living reference.

1 star for superior descriptive prose and another for general knowledge. An ingratiatingly gratuitous read.

Amy says

A lovely and deep look at the world around us: nature, our environment and our spirits.

Tonya says

Invites readers to discern the divine in the ordinary moments of everyday and live an examined life where everything is a form of prayer.

--My thoughts. Well, delicious and more than I expected. Oranges and chocolate brigade? Oh yes please! Beef Stew with Pomegranate Seed. Yum! And so we go through the seasons, and she does it so beautifully,

and gracefully, this is a book to be treasured in your kitchen, passed down and would make a fabulous gift.

Sometimes seasons are just the weather, sometimes seasons are death or difficulty... Remember that one as you read this wonderful treasure...

Louise Mathewson says

Ms Mahany writes about the seasonal routines, including Christian and Jewish traditions. She writes so poetically about traditions, including some stories about her own life it made me pause! It is a lovely book on finding the sacred in life, feeding our souls and our bodies I love her writing and highly recommend it for its reflective gifts!!

Kaye says

This book is a lovely meditation on seeing the sacred in everyday life. Mahany's writing is "delicious and delectable" (words she uses to describe a winter scene), making tangible sights, smells, flavors, and sounds. I listened to this book on Audible and felt transported into a magical place each time I listened to her stories of the seasons.

Heather Haggerty says

Lyrical wisdom.

Lara Leverino says

This book had some lovely descriptive writing but I personally felt the author instead of glorifying the sacred was more just glorifying conventional wisdom. She claims to come from a catholic background and is married to a practicing Jew but I felt she didn't really draw from the Talmud or the Bible but more from nature for her version of spiritualism. Although I appreciated her writing ability I did not often agree with her theology.

Paula Vince says

This book is written like an almanac, giving us plenty to ponder month by month. There are lists of blessings, notifications of ancient religious festivals with suggestions of how to observe them, quotes, recipes, and personal reflections. They are designed with the intention to draw our attention to great, but unobtrusive blessings which we may otherwise overlook.

It reminds me a bit of '1000 Gifts' by Ann Voskamp. It's not always the easiest style of writing to get my head around, being something like a cross between poetry and prose, but is well worth making the effort. I

think I find the style a bit difficult to get into at times, because as a fiction writer, I've been taught that our aim is to make any literary techniques totally unobtrusive, so the story flows. This style, however, seems to be written to draw attention to literary devices so we can't help but look at them. It's beautiful, and definitely suits this genre, but is just not what I'm used to.

I also feel I need to give a caution to readers like myself, from the Southern Hemisphere, before picking up this book. The almanac quality doesn't work for us, as the seasons are back to front. Our summer falls between December and February, and winter between June and August. Although we can always dip into different places to suit our current seasons, this is still a bit of an issue as Barbara Mahany has written it carefully so that readers ought to be shivering at the start of the year and sweltering in the middle.

Thanks to Abingdon Press and NetGalley for my review copy.

Charity Craig says

I bought Barbara Mahany's book a year ago and have been slowly reading it over the last several months. Normally an author might cringe to hear that it took someone a year to read her book, but Barbara was thrilled when I told her. Slow reading is the only way a book called Slowing Time should be read. This book is divided into seasons -- winter gets two sections: one at the beginning and one at the end -- and there are short meditations for each season which I have savored. There also are blessings, prayers, and even recipes to use to make each season an opportunity for slowing down. Now would be the perfect time to start this book -- now or anytime, really. Just be sure to read it.

Sue says

I love, love, love this book....it says "read" by it, but it is one of those books that I will read over and over.

Elida says

The title of this book hooked me (along with familiarity with Barbara Mahany's work). And it's a lovely read. I like that the book is arranged by seasons; it offers things to contemplate and look for all year long. It's the kind of book that inspires you to sit still, watch and listen. It encourages stillness in all ways. What a gift in this noisy world. It would make a really nice gift for the over-scheduled people in your lives. I also was fascinated by Mahany's efforts to blend her own spiritual Catholicism with her husband's Judaism and how she's raising her children. That part of the book flies slightly under the radar, but is fascinating. All in all, well worth your time to read in one sitting, and even better, to keep a copy no hand for consultation throughout the year.
