



A Boomer welcome

I have a neighbor who has a cute, little dog called Boomer. I know this will date me, however, Boomer looks almost identical to the dog on the old vinyl records of “His Master’s Voice.” He has it all, cocked head, cocked ears, the intentness of a hunter and brimming with personality. Veronica, Boomer’s owner, sometimes has me watch him when she has non-dog-friendly appointments. He is no problem at all, the moment she leaves he jumps up on the windowsill and sits there the whole time she is absent, attentively and pensively watching the road.

Then, before I can hear anything, suddenly, he stands shaking with alertness and, sure enough, in drives Veronica. The barking begins long before she enters the house and then, on seeing her, he goes wild, up on his hind legs, front paws together almost applauding her presence. “Boomer, calm down, stop barking, quiet,” is her response, but he charges around the room over the settee, running in circles, barking and yelping with excitement. This continues until he deems the welcome reception complete.

Whenever I recall the scene I have to smile, this royal welcome motivated by pure affection seems to have a message for me. It’s not so much God going away leaving me at the window waiting, longing, (God is always present even when it doesn’t feel like it). No, I think it’s the other way around. We leave home, become caught up in the errands of daily life and all the while the Divine, in us, is there waiting, watching for our return. How often we forget the Beloved only to come back to ourselves, and, if we had inner eyes to see, receive a Boomer welcome from God, ecstatic at our arrival and remembrance of the presence within.

Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection, in the little book *The Practice of the Presence of God*, First Letter, says sometimes he is engaged in daily chores when he notices, out of the corner of his heart, the Divine standing

there. All it takes, according to him, is a loving glance or a word or two of love and God, totally satisfied, returns at rest again in the depths of his soul. These encounters became so common that Lawrence decided to take God everywhere he went, no matter how mundane or tedious.

Every time I re-remember the Presence, I imagine receiving “a Boomer welcome” from God, now, an essential feature of my prayer, together with the realization there are absolutely no non-Divine-friendly places. His Master’s Voice has many improvisations.

Blessings,

Michael

P.S. A few special feast days in July –
11th: St. Benedict, 22nd: St Mary Magdalene,
25th: Santiago de Compostela

The Sweetness of Dogs

What do you say, Percy? I am thinking of sitting out on the sand to watch the moon rise. It’s full tonight.

So we go

and the moon rises, so beautiful it makes me shudder, makes me think about time and space, makes me take measure of myself: one iota pondering heaven. Thus we sit, myself

thinking how grateful I am for the moon’s perfect beauty and also, oh! How rich it is to love the world. Percy, meanwhile, leans against me and gazes up into my face. As though I were just as wonderful as the perfect moon.

MARY OLIVER, *Dog Songs*

Creative and logistical support for Michael, his *Buen Camino* newsletter and HermitFish.com website are provided by Enigma | LA, enigmala.com

Michael News

On the feast of St. Romuald, monks from all the houses met at the Monterey Diocesan Center where they had Chapter, celebrated Eucharist and then walked to a restaurant in the main street for a festive lunch. It is hoped Hwy 1, the road to the Hermitage, will finally open around the middle of July.

‘Levante’ 3

The *Levante 3* retreat almost ready. This retreat is Michael at his very best. Talks include, *Confronting Our Shadow*, *The Prayer of Place*, *Dreaming the Impossible*, *‘Inner’ Weather and Looking for the Beyond*. Watch for an email announcement in the coming days. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/retreat-brochure>

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Michael’s entire audio retreat library is available online 24/7, via subscription – 13 retreats, 65 talks. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/about-the-audio-library>

Supporting Michael

Michael is totally self-sustaining financially, receiving no support from any order or organization. When you subscribe to the audio retreats, purchase a *Levante* retreat, or make a donation, you are supporting Michael’s ministry. Donations to Hermit Fish, Michael’s 501(c)(3) nonprofit, are fully tax deductible. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated. FID: 82-2489475

Visit: <https://www.hermitfish.com/donate>

Levante 2 Video Retreats

JULY 13-19 | Home Retreat • Online

AUG 10-16 | Home Retreat • Online

Levante 2 information:

<https://hermitfish.com/levante-2-schedule>

Levante 1 Video Retreats

JULY 6-12 | Home Retreat • Online

AUG 3-9 | Home Retreat • Online

Levante 1 information:

<https://hermitfish.com/levante-1-retreat-houses>

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