

MEDITATION ON LAKE MICHIGAN

Wendy and I had the opportunity to drive up to Ludington this past Friday. It was a beautiful day for a drive, and we were eager to soak in the rich autumnal colors. After a picnic lunch in Ludington State Park, we pulled off the side of the road to take in the big lake.

Walking the short path between the dunes, our conversation died out naturally, decluttering our minds in preparation for the first view of Lake Michigan. It did not disappoint, sitting as big as ever, shimmering with sunlight and displaying an unimaginable variety of blue in the water. We stood in silence for a minute or so, and then Wendy spoke.

“How does it affect you so quickly? How does it change you inside?”



I knew exactly what she was asking, and I'm sure you do, too, if you've ever spent time at one of the Great Lakes.

The sheer size of the lake is certainly part of the answer. It is a vast thing, spreading literally to the horizon. You cannot take in all of it. To see even a small portion of it means turning your head left and right. The scale of it quickly becomes a lesson in humility, reminding us of our own size and limitations.



But it's not simply large. It's also accessible. The shoreline itself, especially in the Ludington area with its fine sugar sand, is an unspoken invitation to approach. A few months ago, I would have been eager to kick my shoes off and walk right into the water.

This dynamic tension between the immensity of the lake and its simultaneous invitation to approach and touch it, participate in it, that creates the magic within us.

With the approach of All Saints' Day, it has occurred to me that this little lesson learned from the shores of Lake Michigan is an excellent metaphor for our relationship to the Church. The Church, in her fullness, is vast and expansive. The communion of Saints reaches far beyond our vision. Yet, we are invited to approach, step into, and participate in this glorious Body. And the primary way in which we participate in this union is through the sacrament of the Eucharist. The Eternal Word of God, Jesus himself, comes to us in his fullness. We receive him, veiled in bread and wine, on our tongues. *Res miranda.*