

7<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Spinning

**“Like a blind spinner in the sun, I tread my days:  
I know that all the threads will run appointed ways.  
I know each day will bring its task,  
And being blind no more I ask.”**

*Helen Hunt Jackson, Spinning*

On a holiday in Donegal in Ireland, we visited the “Glencolmcille Folk Village”, a thatched-roof replica of a rural village in Ireland’s most north westerly county. In a “clachan” perched on a hillside overlooking the sandy curve of Glen Bay beach in the *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking area) of South West Donegal, there are a reconstructed schoolhouse, a fisherman’s dwelling and a tiny pub-grocer, offering insights into rural Irish life. Several cottages are replicas of dwellings used in each of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with artefacts and utensils of its particular period.

In one of the cottages there was a spinning wheel, drawing our attention to what was integral to the provision of warmth and protection needed for rural life. We were reminded of the processes that take sheep’s wool from shearing, through cleaning and dyeing, to spinning, knitting and weaving. While there was no demonstration on offer, I’d seen spinning in Scotland’s Western Islands before, and I knew what a wonder and a joy it was to see a spinner at work.

In chapter 31 of the Book of Proverbs, the writer compares the diligence of God to the skill and commitment of a working woman, and, at one point, with a spinner in mind, says this:

*In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.*

It’s great to see God described in female terms, the whole chapter using “she” to point to the nature of God. And imbedded in all the metaphors there’s the “spinner”, the God who grasps the spindle, who takes what we have and weaves it into something beautiful and practical, protective and attractive, useful and wonderful. This is my God, the spinner and weaver in my folk-village.

### **Prayer for today**

*Mother God, let all the threads run appointed ways,  
as you produce something amazing out of what I offer you today. Amen.*

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