

A Sacred Nights Journal
inspired by St. Hildegard of Bingen



by Jeannine Goode-Allen, DMin.

Introduction

“What I write is what I see and hear in the vision. I compose no other words than those I hear, and I set them forth in unpolished Latin just as I hear them in the vision. For I am not taught in this vision to write as philosophers do. And the words of the vision are not like words uttered by the mouth of men, but like a shimmering flame or a cloud floating in a clear sky.”

*-St. Hildegard, **Scivias***

*I remember when I first picked up St. Hildegard’s **Scivias**, which actually means “know the ways of God.” I knew that this book was extraordinary because St. Hildegard was the first woman who got permission from the Pope to write on theological issues.*

*As I looked at the **Scivias** for the first time, I discovered that it was filled with incredibly beautiful and powerful images. These were St. Hildegard’s way of showing us what she saw in her visions.*

In reading the book, I discovered that first she shared the image of what she had seen in a vision. Then, she wrote the words of the voice that she had heard when she saw the images. Then she wrote an explanation, an exegesis in theological terms, where she explains in great length and depth what it all means.

I was very excited when I saw this book! Although, I do have to say, it was not easy to read. I had to adjust to the medieval language and the mindset of the time. But, I was very committed and so I kept at it!

A few years ago, I felt as if there had to be a way to connect more deeply with this work of St. Hildegard and be able to use the power of it, so that I could more deeply benefit from it.

So, I decided to record St. Hildegard’s words. I read aloud the words that she had written. When she writes the words of the vision, of what she actually heard when she saw these visions, she always says, “and the Living Light spoke.” So I recorded, on my smartphone, the words of the Living Light as well as the words that were her explanation of why this vision was important.

Then I’d go for walks on the paths behind my home, in the Flatirons here in Colorado. I’d just listen to these recordings, asking to be shown where the gem was in each one. I asked what was the one thing that I was to take from these pages and pages of writing that would be most useful. St. Hildegard often emphasized, “whatever we do in life, let it be useful.” So, I wanted to know what was most useful to me in St. Hildegard’s words.

It was amazing! As I was walking along and listening, at one point, I’d always get a wave of goose bumps. This always happened, without fail, for each recording. I knew that this was the pearl or the golden nugget in the whole piece of her work!

I made note of that nugget in each one of her visions. It was from these pearls that I developed these meditations.

As I listened to St. Hildegard's words, I also sensed questions bubbling up. So, I offer at the end of each guided meditation, a set of questions for you to consider. Answering these questions will help you to connect more deeply with St. Hildegard's words and your own inner being.

You'll notice that I haven't included the images or illuminations themselves in this journal. I want to encourage you, as you listen to the meditations, to let your own inner images arise.

This year, I'd like to invite you to take these meditations and journal into a very sacred time of the year. Starting on the 24th of Dec through the 6th of Jan., I invite you to work with one meditation per day. As you do this work, also pay special attention to your dreams. Write down your dreams. Notice if there are any connections that you find between your dreams and the questions asked in the meditations. See how they connect to St. Hildegard's words.

One of the things that I admire most about St. Hildegard is that she's not afraid to address challenges. You'll notice that she directly works with them in her writings.

So in my questions, I invite you too to explore the areas in your life where you're challenged. St. Hildegard had so much courage. During these sacred days, if uncomfortable things come up for you, I hope you'll have the courage to look at and write about them.

I also talk in the meditations about sitting in front of your altar. If you don't already have one, I invite you to create a private and sacred place where you can work with these meditations. Even a special corner in your home where you have a candle to light. I also like to have a statue of St. Hildegard, some essential oils, and maybe a special rock or gemstone. I invite you to choose those things that speak to you when you create your altar.

Another way to work with these meditations is to draw. As you listen to the meditations, draw what you see as images in your mind's eye. If images come up in your dream, draw those.

I am inviting you to make these meditations your own.

I remember the first time that I worked with a journal during this sacred time of the year from Dec. 24th-Jan. 6th. I was in Florida, vacationing with my family many years ago.

I enjoyed getting up earlier than my family in the mornings and going out to the sand dunes with my journal to write. I reviewed the year that had passed and anticipated the year ahead. I explored the questions that were offered and also my dreams, reflecting on their meaning. In the evening before bed, I'd curl up near the Christmas tree that was set up and continue to journal.

I felt the sacredness of the time. And the great nourishment for my soul. As I reviewed the year in a spiritual context and explored what messages were coming for the year ahead.

*This year, I'll be doing these meditations during the Holy Nights, and I am excited for you to join me! Together let's explore how the beauty, wisdom, and the glory of St. Hildegard's **Scivias** can guide us in our lives.*

Jeannine Goode-Allen

Preparing for Meditation

If you don't already have an altar in your home or a special place for meditation, I invite you to create a private and sacred place where you can work with these meditations. Even a special corner in a quiet room where you have a candle you can light. Maybe a statue of St. Hildegard, some essential oils, and a special rock or gemstone. I invite you to choose those things that speak to you.

I encourage you to do these meditations in the evening before bed. Keep notes in this journal describing your experience and any insights that you receive.

Let the questions speak to you inwardly. Write down any answers that you are given. Early in the next morning, when you first awake, if any further insights arise from the night, add those to your journal.

Paying Attention to Your Dreams

The Sacred Nights during the season of winter are particularly powerful for dreams. They can often reflect the learning that you need to gain from the past year and also give you insights and direction for your highest path into the coming year.

To help you remember your dreams during this sacred time, consider the following simple steps. They'll help you to unlock the hidden treasures from the night.

- **Set an intention** for remembering the dreams that are important for your life's journey and spiritual growth before you go to sleep.
- **Keep your journal near your bedside.** Dreams often dissolve very quickly! So, write them down as soon as you wake up.
- As you first awaken, **keep your eyes closed** while you're still lying relaxed in bed. Put your attention on your dreams, trying to remember any details. Review the main parts of any dream you remember. Attend to the mood and feelings that arose.
- **Open your eyes and sit up slowly.** Write in your journal right away, as many details as you remember. If your time is limited, write down short phrases that include the main events, important details, mood, and feelings.
- Throughout the day, **hold the dreams** that you remembered and wrote in your journal in your consciousness. Ask for spiritual guidance on what insight is most important to understand.
- Before setting an intention around your dreams for that evening, go back and **read your journal entry** from the morning. Has a deeper understanding arisen yet? How will your entry and your thoughts inform your intention for this evening of sleep?