New paintings & stories by Whitney Lofrano

Diving back into oils feels like coming home.

My first two shows at Tim Collom Gallery were primarily watercolor, which was a new medium for me.

It has been a two year ride preparing this show and I am deeply proud of this 45 piece collection.

These paintings are inspired by my adventures abroad and between my ears. There are several paintings about my aboriginal adventure to Australia last winter with my eight year old daughter. Some about my struggle to stay fairly peaceful with a husband that has uncertain health. And then, several paintings about taking my son to London and Madrid this summer.

The past two years taught me, you can't find the answers on the other side of the world.

You can find the answers to happiness during the business of everyday living IF you open your heart wide enough.

The energy you give out, in any language is the energy that comes back to you. What goes around, comes around.

"Buxom Bathers"

One summer I taught art and adventuring in Japan.
I would go swimming with my students all over Tokyo.
The teachers had to wear red swim suits so the students would see us in the mobs of people. Within the first ten minutes the other teacher and I figured out that the red swimsuits were not the only thing that made us stand out in the sea of Japanese swimmers.



"Breaking Away"

Snorkling in the Great Barrier Reef, I was with the mass of people that came to see the wonder I had come to see. When I was able to swim away from the group, untethered by fear of what could swim up under and eat me, I felt a surge. The fish, the reef and I became one and I knew that this moment could fill my creativity for years to come.

The fear had kept my creativity dry.

I have more because I dared to break away.



"Guidance"

We went to the Sydney Observatory to learn about constellations in the Southern Hemisphere. Looking through the 200 year old telescope, it felt like I could grab the stars by the handfull, like sand, and let them drop through my fingers. We learned the Southern Cross, a reliable guide for explorers. But I couldn't help but be struck how men of science would also look to the heavens for guidance.

They would have faith in the light from above. After this, the trip home seemed safer somehow.

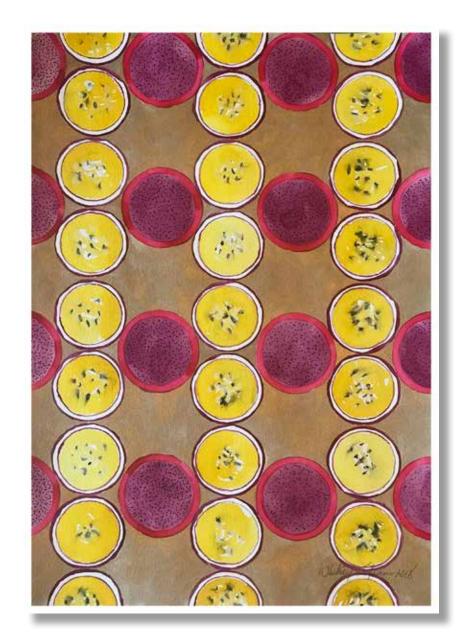




"Lunch with Michael"

Michael was our guide in the Daintree Rainforest. Being Aboriginal, he grew up with this land as his playmate, medicine cabinet and teacher. He took us from beach to forest to river to field and told us the stories his elders told him as a boy. We sat in wonder as he prepared our lunch under the trees holding sleeping bats.

Cutting each piece of Dragon and Passion Fruit, his rough hands gracefully placing each before us like precious stones glimmering in the sun.





"Peel Me a Grape"

Usually my vacations are planned with every second filled.
This rare time, I planned "nothing intervals," on purpose.
It was wonderful. I was in command of my vacation and I
was able to relax like a queen.

While my daughter swam, I sat under the fan palms and ate fruit. The waiter asked if he could help me in any way. Feeling cheeky, I asked him to please "peel me a grape."



"What May Come"

The Mossman River, dark and mysterious flowed next to our treehouse hotel in Australia. The staff told us there was nothing dangerous, like crocodiles, in the water. Some fish, a turtle and a bashful platypus. But, the water was murky and I started to panic in the quiet. Trying to breath through my fear floating over the calm water in our small kayak, my 7-year-old put the paddle over her head like a woman warrior... she was never worried what may come.



"Fly Through the Trees With Me"

Our Aboriginal guide drove us deep into the Daintree Rainforest. The road was rough but his outfitted truck was up to the task, even if the passengers were not. My daughter was sick with anticipation of our tree-top zip line experience waiting at the end of this road. I was starting to feel the anxiety of a mother when her child is unwell. We finally arrived and as the dust settled on the road, a Ulysses butterfly welcomed us as we locked eyes with a smile, "Come fly through the trees with me." So we did.

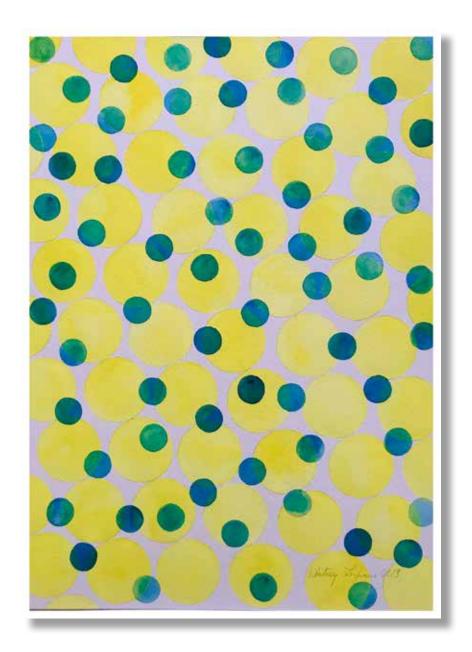




"Kissing the Sun"

After an extremely turbulent 15 hour flight to Sydney from San Francisco, we cleared customs and made it into the fresh rain-filled air outside the airport. We tried to match our driver's quick steps as he led us to his car, when the sun burst through the rainclouds. Magnified by exhaustion and gratitude, it felt like the world was in slow motion.

Each raindrop seemed to be kissing the sun.



"Stowaway Sand"

At first, remembering our trip to the beach at Cape Tribulation was easy. Initially, sand was just in our swimsuits or between our toes. But when we made it home tired, I opened up my suitcase... the stowaway sand brought back all the joy of the carefree day spent with sun soaked hair and smells of sea salt on my skin.

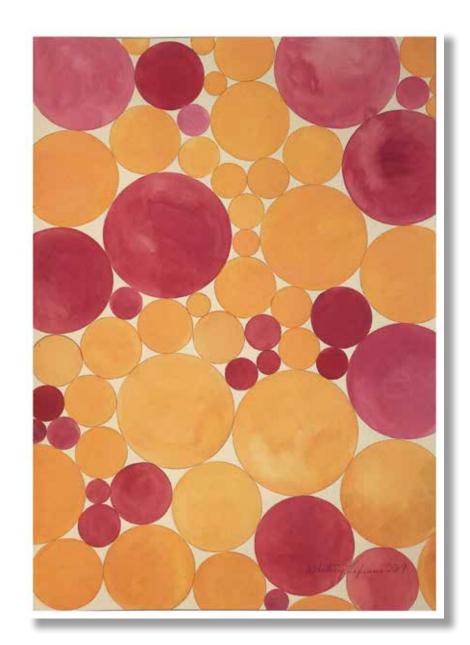




"Sweet Satisfaction"

Checking into our darling hotel in Sydney, my 7-year-old daughter squealed with delight. The lobby had a HUGE table filled with confections. Jars of this and bowls of that. Everything a child would want to see or taste.

When the bellman told her she could have as much as she wanted, her eyes met mine asking for permission. It gave me sweet satisfaction to nod my head, yes.



"Look for the Helpers"

The media is pretty negative. It would have us believe the world is terrible and we should lock ourselves inside. But when I step back and watch all the people helping during the recent fires, I feel happy. I am reminded of that quote from Fred Rogers, "Look for the Helpers* when you are scared." For not everyone of us can help the way we wish we could. But we can stay positive reminding those who stew in negativity that there are many helpers in this world. Look for the positive.

WHITNEY LOFRANO 2018 - 72"x72" Oil on Canvas - \$5500

*The helpers are represented with different flesh tone colors; rich browns, solf pinks and shiny golds and coppers hidden in the red.



"Broken Rocking Chair"

Very often I spin and spin in worry. Will my kids come home from school safe? Will my husband make it through another night? These feelings started to make me sick. Then, of all places, I heard some announcer on ESPN say, "Worry is like a rocking chair, it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere." And, just like that, I decided to break that damn rocking chair. I can find much better things to do with my time.





"Breakthrough"

The dogs and I walk my kids to school each morning and then walk the neighborhood until we're tired. There is little different and so much different from day to day.

The seasons change, the leaves drop and the flowers bloom. But one wet morning, I noticed the bright green moss growing out of the asphalt. It was beautiful. The audacity of this little rooted seed slowly cracking open a huge man made road. It gave me hope that all things are possible if you just don't give up.





"Counting Pills"

After my husband had an epic hospital stay, he was sent home with meds. So many that the discharging doctor told me that I needed to be in charge of them all. Fair enough.

There was counting, recounting, chopping and sorting.
There was clock checking and rechecking. Distributing and restocking. Script filling and transporting. It was a full-time job and I was bad at it. After two months things started to slip. I buckled under the pressure and turned into Nurse Ratchet. I quit. Count your own damn pills.



"Buzzsaw Growth"

The neighbor hacked down all the privacy trees by our bathroom. I could see their TV now. Could they see me in the shower? I was seething. I was going to have to buy new trees! New drip system and labor! It's going to cost a fortune. But slowly, real problems crept in and I forgot about the trees. One day, I saw that my sad baby hedges had grown three feet. The sunlight they craved for years was now feeding them all.

Lesson learned: I might feel naked and afraid after my privacy is exposed but if I take care of my side of the fence, those healthy roots are deep enough to handle the heat of full sun.

"You are Not Alone"

Swimming over the bright shallow Opal Reef of the Great Barrier Reef, covered in millions of fish, delighted by every creature we met. I went alone to the edge of the reef. A straight drop down to the abyss. My heart dropped like when I am in a glass elevator or on a roller coaster. Terrified for a moment, I took a deep breath and a single blue fish with a yellow dot on his tail swam up to me, looked at me and I followed him back to the shallow.

Later I found out from our captain, a shark had been lurking right there. That little fish (with the dot) saved me.



"Meeting Matsui"

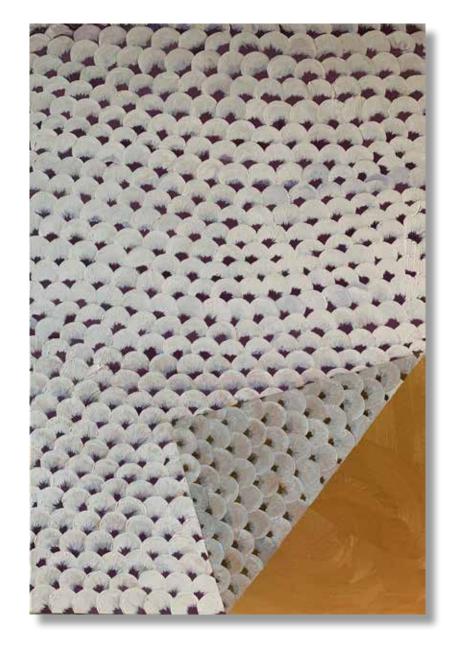
A friend works for the Congresswoman and asked me to judge the congressional art competition. Witnessing the art, the creativity and the people behind the competition renewed my faith in what government can do for the youth of tomorrow. The kids were all excited to have their work shown at The Crocker Art Museum. I wore a top with white lace circles, a gift from the biggest supporter of my art, my Gram. Congresswoman Matsui wore a beautiful red suit and walked around the room making everyone feel good about their future as artists. True leadership in action.





"Turn the Page"

So many wishes unfullfilled as we waited all Winter for a break from the neverending bad news coming from the hospital. Lining up dandelions like lines of cocaine. Waiting for the the change, the promise, the high of good news. The paper thin prayers and well wishes stacking up like old papers soked from tears. A thousand wishes for things to go back to normal. A thousand wishes for something better. A thousand wishes for a new view, a blank slate, a different situation. A thousand wishes to turn the page.



"Glinda's Bubble"

Every living thing on the planet is programed to reach it's full potential. It started with a vision prior to being placed on the planet. Will circumstances or fear get in the way?

The human soul has to grow like flower or a forest.

Entelechy is the realization of the soul's full potential. And as I was studying this concept my daughter asked to watch The Wizard of Oz. Synchronicity at work. Glinda reminds Dorothy and her friends, "You've always had the power my dear, you just had to learn it for yourself."

WHITNEY LOFRANO 2019 - 36"x36" Oil on Canvas - \$2300



"Pull Me Tight"

We are not one. We are two who decided to weave our lives together. Our strength depends on our closeness to each other. Our love. Our touch. Worries and fears start to pick at us like an unwanted knot in a gold chain. We could get loose enough to let go. To make a break. To float away from each other with only the marks of the past where we held on to each other so tightly before.

I like the way we fit together. Pull me tight and never let go.



WHITNEY LOFRANO 2019 - 36"x72" Oil on Canvas - \$3800



"The Impossible Comeback"

It's not obvious I would compare my life to Tiger Woods. Other than sharing the same birthday, not much the same on the surface. But watching his "perfect life" shattered by addiction and lies. I could relate. He worked to rebuild his foundation, his life and his swing. He took the 2019 trophy at Augusta with his truth out in the open. So this win was pure and so much more honest than any others. And I know that feeling. Winning without hiding. I feel that when my art is on display. When someone asks how I got here I can tell them the truth and the stuggle and the comeback.





"Not Fortnite"

Look son, no screens!

This is just what my son needed for two weeks.

So we booked our trip that included zero video games and loads of adventure.

London and Madrid will forever be the "choose our own adventure" that ended the best Summer ever.



"Higher Desire"

Each choice we make propels us toward love or fear.

When sitting at a dinner party, I can choose to tell
a piece of juicy gossip or I can choose to praise a success
of someone we all know. I can choose to put my desire for
friendship and trust over my desire for popularity.

If I lie to advance my carrer, I put my desire for money over my desire for honesty. Fear wins when we make the wrong choices and the choices we make start to stack up against us. Each choice made with love is one step closer to freedom from fear. That is the highest desire.

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"Meatballs or Stockholm"

I was having a quick lunch with my mom at IKEA, because she is forever redecorating. She has spent hours contemplating building designs, color choices & fabrics. Watching her gave me confidence making design choices on the fly as an art director. But staying home with the kids and not working, I started obsessing over making my home newer and better. It was so important to my mom, therefore, it should be important to me. But when is enough enough? When does it become an addiction and a sieve for money that could be spent somewhere else? Like Sweden? So, I started saving for Stockholm. Deciding against the items in my blue bag.



"Defending the Nest"

Airing out the house one warm Spring morning we heard the birds in the trees outside my daughter's window going crazy. Snowball, the ever sceeming neighborhood cat, was hunting the baby birds that just hatched. The parent birds were crying for help against the evil predator. My daughter and I screamed out the window and he stopped dead in his tracks. But only when we got the hose out to wash him away, did he leave those babies alone for good.

We enjoyed those babies until they learned to fly... being good neighbors, we couldn't help but defend their nest.





"Phoenix"

Everything had to fall for the colors to come from the black Earth. The richness of the soil and the festering fear gave way to the colorful life today.

Living in color and growing but always using those rich black nutrients to feed the gratitude for what is now.



WHITNEY LOFRANO - FRIENDSHIP PAINTINGS
Twin 12"x9" Watercolors on Paper - \$375 Each



"Fill Your Holes"

Those pieces and parts of me, the self-defeating talk, the whip at my back, it all had to go if I was to live life.

So one day I popped them out like champage corks under pressure. They went willingly.

With their own momentum we said goodbye. Now what I choose to fill up those holes is my choice.



WHITNEY LOFRANO - FRIENDSHIP PAINTINGS Twin 12"x9" Watercolors on Paper - \$375 Each



"Surrounded"

You might as well give up, we've got you surrounded with love and kindness. Your type doesn't survive that. You were pretty and edgy and now there is no need for the darkness. Every little strand of hair in place. Pushing through the pain of four inch-heels for the ninth hour. I am worthy.

Your pain isn't welcome here and won't survive.

I've killed you with kindness.

WHITNEY LOFRANO - FRIENDSHIP PAINTINGS Twin 12"x9" Watercolors on Paper - \$375 Each



"Force Field"

Your love is a powerful shield when the pecking of fear wants to sting again and again.



WHITNEY LOFRANO - FRIENDSHIP PAINTINGS Twin 12"x9" Watercolors on Paper - \$375 Each

"Cold Front"

As the storm propels us forward, all the balloons we have in the air float on the breeze of the past. And thank God we don't stay in the same place forever. We continue to rise and elevate, choosing not to succumb to the storm that howls at us from a long time ago.

Now we float above the fray.

WHITNEY LOFRANO - FRIENDSHIP PAINTINGS
Twin 12"x9" Watercolors on Paper - \$375 Each



"Your Positive Reflection"

Before you were born, I listened when you told me to get clean. Living the way you needed me to until we met and I renewed my promise. Your positive reflection paved the way to your own sobriety. You knew the way home. I just swept off the steps to make it easier for you to see the way.





"Grazing in Kelley Green"

After a horrible Winter my old friends, The Kelleys, invited me to Healdsburg for Mother's Day Weekend. Jen was cooking. Tim was serving. And the sun was out while we all grazed on Charcuterie and laughed until it got dark. I realize it is not nice to call myself and all my oldest girlfriends cows but, the cows in Healdsburg are happy and give no shits and that is how we were for those 48 beautiful hours. Moo.

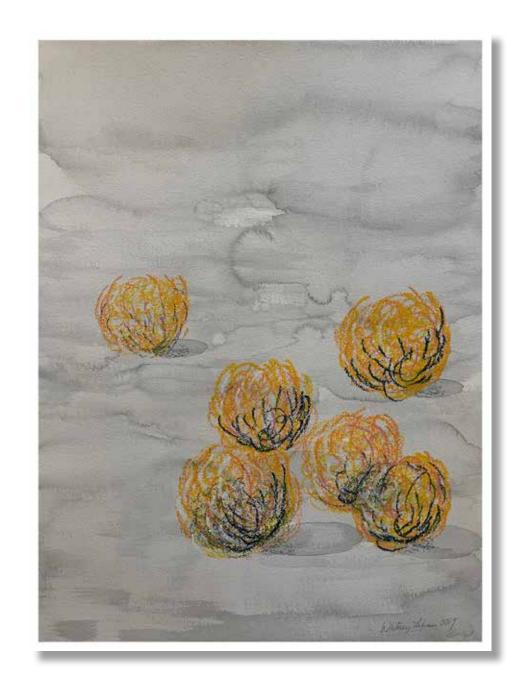
Wishing you a childless Mother's Day in 2020. Don't knock it until you try it.



"Rollin' Rollin' Rollin"

There is a pure delight I feel anytime a tumble weed family crosses my path when visiting Reno. No matter my mood, I'm instantly happy. They are bouncy and whimsical and provoke silly Western film music in my head. These earth dust bunnies give me hope that life after death might be a bit brighter, and more adventurous, than previously indicated.







"Turning the Tides"

The moon has the power to make the oceans swell and recede. That is real power.

When I am feeling irritated I have learned I am trying to control a person or thing that is not going my way.

I am not powerful enough to control anyone.

And frankly, it's not my job. I can look to the moon and remember what true power looks like.

And that brings me back to Earth.

WHITNEY LOFRANO 2019 - 9"x12" Watercolor on Paper - \$275





"Caught in the Rain"

I needed alone time. I decided to stream a movie outside in my car (a hidden spot where our home WiFi still reaches).

The soft rain pilling up on my sunroof as I laid back to watch and calm my body. About 30 minutes in, a neighbor tapped on the glass to make sure I was okay. It scared the shit out of me and I was caught.



"What Goes Around"

There are many schools of thought on the Ouroboros. Tutankhamun had one at his burial site indicating he would live forever. Carl Jung thought medicine men created synthetically to heal might actually distroy us. Joseph Campbell observed the Hero's Journey. That man needed to die to be reborn. I feel it's an important symbol about tapping into our intuition. We have been here before and we will be here again. So why not do what's right and move our soul forward instead of reliving history again and again.

Also, never go to Costco hungry.





"Circulation Prayer"

Living in a jester's court with the doctors and other characters telling us that my husband's vein system would not work the same ever again. So, I painted the madness I felt as a vein system. Each circle I painted, saying a prayer for movement. Months at the painting, not feeling any change. The "experts" had a succession of five different breakthroughs to get us to the one doctor that had insight into this madness. When the lights are out on a dark night and you pray for the one you love, it is that love that will shine in the darkness. So when you turn the lights out on this painting a message of "Love" will glow. Love always wins.



"Jacked Up"

We stepped off the plane in London expecting a world of Mary Poppins and Burt. We got Theresa May and Johnson. For or against Brexit, no middle ground. Just like home. God forbid you might see some points the other side is making. People in the center have nothing to cling to because the arguments are so polarizing. If you don't pick sides, you will be shot down (with luck, metaphorically). Just like America, England is jacked up. So, what better than to make Union Jack sideways and off by just a stroke.



"Sun Worshipers"

On our last morning in Madrid my friend Becca took us to see the Royal Gardens. It was blazing at nine in the morning. The streets were being washed down from last nights fun. Steam rising on my legs. We tried to stay in the cover of the trees as we marveled at the beauty of the sleeping city. At the Crystal Palace, there was a massive pond with a group of turtles. Unlike us, these sun loving creatures were fighting one another for a better spot on the black rocks below. No SPF required.



"Soul Collection"

London's Southwark Cathedral. A place of Christian worship for over 1000 years. William Shakespeare worshiped here with his brother. Walking through the light-filled nooks felt like I was sharing space with a labyrinth of souls from yesterday. Without understanding the rituals within the walls of a church, I still felt touched by the Grace within the chambers. Inspiration infused into every carving and placed piece of stained glass.

Doorkins the Magnificent, the church cat, also made us feel welcome with the swish of her tail on our legs.



"Spitfire"

Walking the streets of London with my son is a strong reminder that not long ago the world was under attack. While I go about my days in freedom, I seem to forget that WWII was a battle that required everyone's participation. All over London there are reminders of the fight. Certain areas are "pre-War" or "untouched by bombers" as we are shown neighborhoods, institutions and tools that kept freedom alive. The Royal Airforce had the Spitfire plane that became a symbol of hope for Brits and the allies. "Her power gliding above the earth like an angel of light."



"Puppies e3 Lollipops"

Life wants to wash away childlike dreams of happiness because they are not practical. We know candy has too many calories.

A puppy is too much work. These life pleasures get put into a yesterday box. And eventually, we start to float away in a cloud of responsibilities. The lists never growing shorter.

The Aboriginals manifest dreams with small dots. I used this same

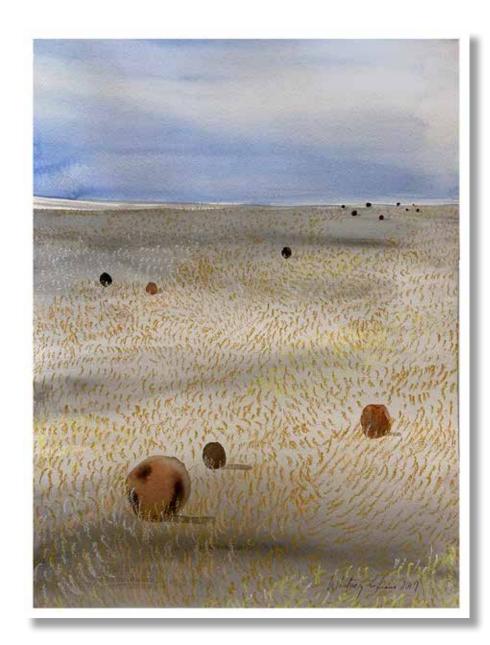
tool to represent whimsical puppy footprints all over my heart.

Lollipops in abstraction float just begging to be licked. Ignoring practicality, my dreams stay alive if I buck "should."



"Friends of Ferdinand"

When in Madrid, the subject of bull fighting is bound to come up. My friend explained the history and the brutality to my almost 12-year-old boy. And while his face started to curl with disgust, I was reminded of the sweet story book we had at home. "Ferdinand" by Munro Leaf. The quiet bull that just liked to sit and smell the flowers. Brady is a lot like that Ferdinand, he is sweet and never liked to fight or wrassle with other boys. As we rode out of the city, we wished those bulls well as they sat in the fields.



"Santa Maria"

After we ate too many churros to count, we walked to Almudena Cathedral in Madrid (Santa María la Real de La Almudena). A modern cathedral by European standards. Although construction began in 1879, it wasn't actually consecrated until 1993 because of delays in construction caused by things like the Spanish Civil War.

As such, the exterior is traditional Gothic, but the interior is very modern. The late afternoon light filling the space was so spiritual. Sun hitting the main stained glass over the main alter. "Sweet Mother of God," just popped out.

