



WESTERN REGION SALVATORIAN NEWSLETTER

June 2020

Salvatorian Western Region

Regional Moderator:

Sr. Sheila Novak

Regional Representative to LSNB:

Jan Bencken

Men's Religious Representative:

Fr. Marcel Emeh

Women's Religious Representative:

Sr. Jean Schafer

Secretary: Joyce Dwonch

Treasurer: Joyce Daniels

Lay Representatives:

Mickey Drake

Mary Jo Verke

Salvatorian Links

www.salvatorians.com

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www.laysalvatorians.com

www.salvatorianfamily.us

Newsletter Publisher & Editor:

Rita Schillin

schillin2@icloud.com

From our Regional Moderator, Sr. Sheila Novak

NAME CALLING

Every time I hear Jesus say, "I no longer call you servants, . . . I have called you friends". (Jn 15:15) I am awestruck that Jesus would call me friend! That word holds special meaning for me. A friend is somewhat of an equal! It says relationship, shared life experiences, someone you enjoy being with, a person you can learn from, share yourself with and with whom you can have just plain fun. While that last phrase is something I have not experienced too often with Jesus, it is still awesome to be counted among his friends! After all, we do share a similar name with being Salvatorians!

Then today when I prayed over a gospel I have read countless times in my life, another name jumped out at me. Jesus is again at the Last Supper, praying to God for us, and he says of his followers, "they are your gift to me." (Jn 17:24) What a name to be called! A gift! Maybe someone has said to you – you are a gift to me. That is cause to feel a special connection between two people. But I have to admit, I never thought of myself as a gift to Jesus, my friend! Given the person I am with my shortcomings as well as my strengths, the times I have not always measured up – it catches my breath to realize I am being called a gift. It is a name to soak into the depths of my being and allow it to grace me.

Our region has recently had a moment of having one of our "gifts" move on from us, namely JoAnn Kuphaldt. The end came more quickly than we realized, but fortunately some of us were able to see her in her last days and tell her what she meant to us. That is so much better than waiting until a wake service for that kind of testimony.

Now we have another great opportunity to celebrate three "gifts" to our region called Mark and Mary Jo Verke and Joyce Dwonch. This is their 25th year of being Salvatorians. They were probably pioneers in getting the lay Salvatorians started here in the West. Their jubilees were to be celebrated this summer at the National Assembly in Milwaukee – but the quarantine had other ideas. So we are looking at having a celebration here, as described in a later article in this newsletter.





We are hoping things open up somewhat by September, but it will be a “safe” celebration. It will be a chance to highlight how each of them gifts our region and how grateful we are that they are a part of us. It has been a while since we were able to gather, so we have the summer to look forward to this joyous event.

In the meantime, do hear the words of the Lord to you: “You are friend! You are gift to me!!” What a wonderful world it would be if we saw the gift in each person we encounter. Jesus had eyes to see beyond all the chaos and struggle at the Last Supper. May he give us “gifting” eyes?

A parishioner from our former parish in Vista, CA offers some perspectives that can benefit all of us.

Three Things the Pandemic Has Given Me

Lately, I’ve been asking God to show me what good can come from this challenging time of the pandemic. Faithful God that he is, he answered my prayer by helping me see three things that the pandemic has given me: 1) time to nurture my relationship with God, 2) time to nurture my relationship with my spouse, and 3) time to reconcile my relationship with the world.

First, the pandemic has given me time to nurture my relationship with God in a way that I never would’ve devised on my own. In my separation from the Mass and the Eucharist, I feel an ever-growing ache and longing to connect with the Lord.

Each Sunday when my husband and I watch the . . . Mass online, I pray with all my heart the Act of Spiritual Communion. The Lord answers by coming to me deep in my soul with such tenderness and peace. Never have I experienced a spiritual union with Jesus quite like this. I don’t believe I would have these experiences if not for the pandemic. It is a true grace for which I am ever grateful.

Second, the pandemic has given me time to nurture my relationship with my husband, Eddie. He is retired while my full-time job has now moved to our dining room table where I am working remotely until who-knows-when. This means we’ve been together pretty much 24/7. In our 23 years of marriage, we have never spent... SO... MUCH... TIME... TOGETHER...! Don’t get me wrong—this has been a good thing.

Like everyone else, we’ve been forced to ditch our “normal routine” and create a new “quaran-routine.” An important part of this is still making time for “date nights” even though we cannot go out. We enjoyed the *Witness to Love BE LIGHT Date Night* sessions a few weeks ago.

One session sparked an idea to shake up our nightly and well-rutted prayer routine. I realized we always pray for

others—family, friends, co-workers—but very seldom would we pray out loud *for each other*. We do pray for one another, but mostly separately and silently on our own. Instead of keeping these prayers to ourselves, Eddie and I decided to start saying them out loud *to each other*.

Wow, I’ve been taken aback at how moving it is to hear my husband speak aloud his blessing prayer for me each night. And I hope he feels equally blessed when I pray aloud for him. This is yet another great gift God has given us by way of the pandemic.

Finally, the pandemic has given me time to reconcile my relationship with the world. Pushing the pause button on life-as-we-knew-it has allowed this natural-born introvert some much-needed time to slow down and recharge her inner battery.

An article I read recently said that while the extroverts and perfectionists of the world are struggling mightily with the quarantine, the introverts—in general—don’t mind it so much. True to form, I’ve been secretly relishing this time at home, having fewer worldly demands and less frequent social obligations.

As much as I’ve savored this slower quieter life, I am fully aware this is not my vocation. God did not call me to a cloistered life of quiet contemplation. Yet, as a Christian trying to live my faith in a diverse and increasingly secular culture, I struggle mightily.

So in these days of solitude, knowing I will have to venture out in the world in due time, I ask God, “What do you want from me out in the world?” I found one answer in the Scripture passage from 1 Peter 3:15, “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.”

Despite the pandemic still menacing, I do feel hopeful. I believe Jesus calls me to trust now more than ever that he will see us all through this crisis and to boldly share with others the reason for my hope in the face of these uncertain times.

After much reflection, I share this with the world as the reason for my hope: Jesus is the path on which I walk, “the way,” he is my companion on the journey, “the truth,” and he is my final destination, “the life.” No matter if the journey that lies ahead brings joy or sorrow, my heart is not troubled, and I do not fear. I trust in the Lord as “the way and the truth and the life.” He is my path, my companion, and my destination. *by Sheila Murphy*

Some questions to ponder:

- *What am I learning from this pandemic?*
- *How will I look at life differently?*
- *How will I live out our faith in new ways?*



Summer Birthdays



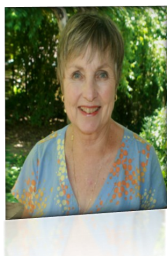
Colleen McCormack	June 19
Leah Edwards	June 25
Mary Rutter	June 25



Penny Rose	July 7
Roman Mueller	July 9
Henry Gonsalves	July 15

Jan Targetta	August 8
Ken Drake	August 25

Jubilee Celebration



Our region is blessed with having three silver jubilarians this year, Mark and Mary Jo Verke and Joyce Dwonch. The wonderful jubilee celebration that was to happen in Milwaukee culminating our National Assembly on June 27th got canceled with the quarantine lock downs. But at our recent Western Regional Board meeting, we said we want to celebrate this significant moment in our region's history. So Jan Bencken, Joyce Daniels and S Sheila became a jubilee committee of three.



Plans are in the works to hold the celebration all things considered. Father Roman is the opening of churches, but he thinks by have a plan B if the church is not an option. summer break, we will be emailing the final date on your calendars. Do be on the



tion on Saturday, September 12th at 1:00 PM – awaiting directives from the diocese regarding then we can gather at Divine Savior. We do Since this is the last newsletter before our final plans to you closer to September. Mark lookout for more details about this event.



Laughter



Good for the Soul!!

Going outdoors
is not cancelled, listening
to music is not cancelled,
quality time with our
families is not cancelled,
reading a book is not
cancelled, sharing with
friends is not cancelled,
singing out loud is not
cancelled, laughing has
not been cancelled,
sharing **HOPE** with others
has not been cancelled.
Let's **EMBRACE** what
we have.



Anyone else's car
getting 3 weeks to the
gallon at the moment ?

