



Western Region Salvatorian Newsletter

April 2019

Salvatorian Western Region

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From our Regional Moderator, Sr. Sheila Novak Resurrection Possibilities

Resurrection happened in a garden. It is literally taking place at Divine Savior parish right now. The almost one acre of land to the west of the parish property is being transformed from a weed patch into a vegetable table.

It started with the call of Pope Francis to care for our earth, with the Creation Care Committee who pondered the call and to do something about it. The land was "scouted", volunteers came forward and offered their gifts of time and expertise in so many ways. Bobcats rolled in to level the ground, to clear garden spaces, to remove dead trees. Plans were laid out and garden areas were carefully marked off. A water system was put in place to ensure growth in the hot Sacramento days ahead. Boxes were built to bed the plants and seeds. Good soil and compost prepared the way for the planting. Seeds nurtured at home found a new home in the garden boxes. We wait now in hope for what will be produced and used for our weekly community meal. It will be healthy and nurturing for the poor, the homeless, for the elderly and whom ever else comes to our Divine Savior table. It is a picture of what goes into resurrection.

We have made it through the 40 days of Lent and are now into the 50 days of the Easter season! There is a wisdom here about this 40/50 ratio. Could it be that resurrection is more of a challenge than the "dying" of Lent? Is it more difficult to see the possibilities that resurrection offers us, to give time to pondering, to make resurrection plans and then make them happen? We have the gift of other believers to help make resurrection come about, to keep the urging of Jesus alive and well. It really why we are Salvatorians in the first place. Salvatorians are a focused group within the larger body of believers; we know them and can count on them for support in our resurrection journey. In this Easter season, we are strengthened by each other as we deepen resurrection possibilities within ourselves. It is actually why Jesus came in the first place. Resurrection was not meant to be a onetime event! It is all about starting a chain reaction!

- Do you think it is more difficult to rise than to die?
- When you remember a time of "resurrection" in your life, how did it unfold?
- What resurrection possibility are you hoping for this year?
- What kind of help do you need to make it happen?



Resurrection Transformation

“The tomb was empty,” the Scriptures say, metaphorically perhaps but pointedly, nevertheless. People came to know Jesus’ presence again, not the same as before the crucifixion, true, but real, nevertheless. Transformed. Somehow or other Jesus had defeated death, had snatched new life from its cavernous throat. The implications were overwhelming. Death, even once transcended, could never be permanent again. In fact, life itself could never be the same again. Jesus risen from the dead made life the stuff of eternity. Jesus transformed leads us to look beyond the obvious, to allow for the presence of God in alien places, in unanticipated ways.

The question is, of course, what really happened there? And what does it have to do with us? The answer is simple. Transformation happened. What had always been became more than it was. And because of that, life changed everywhere. The transformation was on both sides: Jesus waxed to new fullness, yes, but so did the people around him. New life burgeoned everywhere.

Where once they had known Jesus, in retrospect people now saw the Christ, the anointed one of God for whom they waited as well. There were witnesses. Women first, then the apostles, then people on the road. But, most interesting of all, they each saw him differently now. He did not live with them now: he simply “came” to them. He did not do the things he did before. He showed a new side of himself—or if not really new, at least largely unnoticed before this time. This radiant Jesus had always been there, had even been glimpsed from time to time, perhaps, but had never before been this fully luminous, completely effulgent, totally aglow, entirely apparent to the people around him. That we understand. We know that growth and change are not death.

One thing is for sure: The Resurrection of Jesus is not about “resuscitation.” A corpse does not come to life here and wait again to die. A body does not rise to bleed again. No, the Resurrection of Jesus is not about re-vivification of an old life, it is about experiencing a new kind of life entirely. And no one knows how it happened; we only know that it happened.

Resurrection testifies to the metamorphosis of the Jesus of history to the Christ of faith. It is about coming to grips with the transformed and transforming presence of Christ then, now, and always. Once that happens, life is never again the same. Life begins anew.

To say, “I believe in Jesus Christ...who rose from the dead,” then, is to say I believe that the Resurrection goes on and on and on forever. Every time Jesus rises in our own hearts in new ways, the Resurrection happens again. Every time we see Jesus where we did not recognize him before—in the faces of the poor, in the love of the unloved, in the revelatory moments of life, Jesus rises anew. But that is not all. The real proof of the Resurrection lies not in the transformation of Jesus alone, but the transformation awaiting us who accept it.

The real lesson of resurrection may be its strangest, strongest one. When Jesus died, hope died. The apostles grieved the death of Jesus. The public was scandalized. The synagogue said good riddance to a troublemaker. The entire enterprise collapsed. But in the end, out of apparent failure, came new life stronger than it had ever been before. And so, too, for us. When one phase of life ends, a new one arises, if we do not spend too much time grieving the one before it, if we allow new grace to flow through us.

—from *In Search of Belief* by Joan Chittister

April Gathering by Rita Schillin

In April we gathered at Divine Savior...however, our hostesses were St. Jean and Sr. Sheila. They had the hall decorated with love and hospitality and they kept saying they wished that their home was a big enough to have us all go there....But, it didn't matter!!!...the food was delicious and the fellowship memorable. We just about had a full turnout from our Salvatorian family including Leah Edwards. Everyone was thrilled to see her. It was also good to be joined by those who are interested in our Salvatorian family.

After a wonderfully satisfying lunch, Sr. Sheila had us all do a 'check-in' to bring us up to date on what is happening around our region. We heard about travels, Easter preparations, SDS projects in Africa and Haiti (including the efforts of our ongoing recycling project headed by Henry Gonzalves).

After the check in, we discussed the article from our newsletter about Holy Week and we discussed whether or not Holy Thursday was really a revolution. After listening to the discussion and insight from everyone, it could easily be surmised that it was.

We celebrated Mark, Mary Jo, and Shirley's birthdays and then Fr. Sal led us in an anointing celebration using oil that had just been blessed by the Bishop in his area.

Upcoming Gathering in May

The May regional gathering will be at the Drake's house in Napa on Friday May 10th starting at 3:00 pm. Our address is 3073 Montclair Ave. If you are in Napa early, just come on over.

PLEASE RSVP to Mickey at 707-253-8363 or mdrake9223@sbcglobal.net to let us know what you plan to bring and so that we can plan the proper amount of food. We will be serving bratwurst again in honor of Fr. Bob and Fr. Al and water, soda, and beer. No need to bring plates or silverware this



Photos below and on page 4 are from our April gathering. Thank you Fr. Sal!!!



