



Into the light of the Rising Son

For the last 25 years, I have had a little picture of Mary Magdalene, both in my cell at the Hermitage in Big Sur (which was dedicated to her), and here in Santa Cruz. Mary Magdalene has traditionally been special to hermits, perhaps because she embodies, in many ways, the bride in the “Song of Songs,” another eremitical favorite.

The picture I have is by the German priest, artist Fr. Sieger Koder (I’ve used his talented work in past retreats). It captures the moment, on the first Easter morning, just as the sun was rising, when Mary, crying and distraught, was outside the empty tomb (John 20:1-18). You remember the story.

Mary of Mandala goes to the tomb early in the morning, while it is still dark. She finds it empty, runs and tells the Apostles. Peter and John rush to the tomb, find it indeed empty except for the folded linen wrapping cloths, bewildered they leave. Mary remains, dawn is breaking. She peers again into the darkness and sees two Angels



sitting there. Then, hearing someone behind her she turns around, weeping, sees who she thinks is the gardener, but he is the Risen Christ who calls her name.

My picture captures this moment, the blood-red horizon, Mary kneeling, turned, hand up shading her eyes from the brightness, looking not at the viewer but at the Gardener Christ who says, “Mary.”

It’s extra dark, just before dawn and this is where most of us have been, and probably still are, these past months and years of Covid and, now, Ukraine. We have been overwhelmed with death, dying, emptiness, loss, grief and uncertainty. Then, the feast of Easter, like a sunrise (a daily sacrament of resurrection), and the Risen

One, in disguise, calls to us.

This Easter invites us to turn from the tomb, and in the blinding light, realize the Beloved is there and has been all along, in one of His many disguises – gardener, pilgrim stranger, breakfast chef, campfire maker, wound specialist, magician – calling our name and offering us Shalom-peace. The Resurrection is best grasped as it ricochets in our lives. Let’s turn around, into the light of the Rising Son, and, like Mary of Magdala, become a messenger of hope and peace to our world.

United at Resurrection Eucharist, Sunrise and Easter Sunday’s late afternoon Emmaus walk.

Blessings,

Michael

Instead of a poem or reading this month, perhaps we could spend time with the Mary of Magdala painting by Fr. Koeder and reread John 20:1-18. Visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/vcysz9tp>

Levante 1 Retreat Schedule

MAY 13-15 | Mary & Joseph Retreat Center
Online or On-Site

5300 Crest Road, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

MAY 26-29 | Mercy Center Auburn
On-Site only

535 Sacramento Street, Auburn, CA 95603

MAY 27-29 | Santa Sabina Retreat Center
Online or On-Site

25 Magnolia Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901

JULY 19-26 | Villa Maria del Mar Retreat Center
On-Site only

21918 East Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

For information about *Levante 1*, visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/levante-1-retreat-houses>

Creative and logistical support for Michael, his *Buen Camino* newsletter and HermitFish.com website are provided by Enigma | LA, enigmala.com

Michael news

Michael shared how much he has benefited from the daily Lenten questions posted on HermitFish.com, connecting them with one of his favorite quotes from Rainer Maria Rilke, “Live the questions...into the answer.” The questions change each day through Lent. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com>

‘Levante 1’ news

We continue to add retreat centers that will be hosting Michael’s much-anticipated *Levante 1* retreat. Check them out at:

<https://tinyurl.com/3j5yky9m>

Watch the *Levante 1* preview:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9dbmxx>

CD bundle savings

You can save \$15-25 on bundled CD sets of Michael’s most popular retreat series. Bundles of the *Contemplative Ways of Being 1, 2 & 3* series; and *Cave of the Heart 1, 2 & 3* series are now each available for \$25 off. The bundle of *Celtic Spirituality I & II* is \$15 off.

CD sets of several of Michael’s retreats are available. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/retreats-cd-sets>

Journals are companion keepsakes to the retreat recordings. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/retreat-journals>

Downloads of all 13 of Michael’s retreats (5 talks ea) are available. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/audio-retreats>

Thanks for your support

Michael is grateful to everyone for your continued prayers, good wishes and support. Donations to Hermit Fish, Michael’s 501(c)(3) nonprofit, are fully tax deductible. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated. FID: 82-2489475

Visit: <https://www.hermitfish.com/donate>

To be added to Michael’s email distribution go to <https://www.hermitfish.com> and scroll to the bottom of the page to sign up.