



# Buen Camino

Newsletter of Fr. Michael Fish, OSB, CAM

## Make peace and build

Lately, even a cursory look at the news leaves us with a litany of concerns and questions – The high temperatures in parts of the country, flooding in Europe and China, the virulent spread of the Delta variant, fires in California and the Pacific Northwest, the US Catholic Bishops proposed letter on the Eucharist, riots and looting in South Africa.

How are we to react and respond to these and more? I would like to remind you of something I mentioned in the retreat conference, “The Inner Monk.” In one of Alexander Shaia’s books he speaks of four reactions among the Jews who fled to Alexandria after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE (paraphrasing):

1. *All is lost, it is the end, the apocalypse.*
2. *The destruction of the Temple was God punishing us for our laxity, so we must return to the diligent observation of the Law, to ritual and practice, the old ways.*
3. *Afraid and confused, we don’t know what is happening. Let’s just get on with life, looking for safety and security.*
4. *And finally, the followers of Jesus, who said, “He told us this would happen, let’s look for the Temple within and worship in spirit and truth. Let us not be afraid.”*

All of these reactions are present today in society but also in us, so how to find “modus vivendi” (way of life)?

I believe we are invited to return, yet again, to the essentials: the Gospel, the Holy Spirit (who is the Risen Christ present in us and who is Church), Eucharist, prayer, faith community and service.

Mandela Day, 18 July, fell immediately after terrible riots and looting in parts of South Africa. There is a tradition, on this day, of giving 67 minutes of service, in honor of Mandela’s 67 years of dedication to humanity. This year there were heartening accounts

of many from different backgrounds, beliefs, political persuasions and ages, working together to help clean up the devastation.

I wonder if we could do something similar, in honor of the 33 years of Jesus’s life, to take half an hour each day to “do” one of the essentials? The day and situation will dictate which one you choose. Instead of feeling paralyzed, overwhelmed or depressed, perform one essential act (you may have your own list), and in this way, rather than cursing the darkness, we light a candle.

In Nelson Mandela’s own words, “It is easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build.”

Blessings,

*Michael*

## Sometimes Mysteriously

Sometimes in the evening when love tunes its harp and the crickets celebrate life, I am like a troubadour in search of friends, loved ones, anyone who will share with me a bit of conversation. My loneliness arrives ghostlike and pretentious, it seeks my soul, it is ravenous and hurting. I admire my father who always has advice in these matters, but a game of chess won’t do, or the frivolity of religion.

I want to find a solution, so I write letters, poems, and sometimes I touch solitude on the shoulder and surrender to a great tranquility. I understand I need courage and sometimes, mysteriously, I feel whole.

*Luis Omar Salinas*  
THE FOLLOWER OF DUSK

## Michael news

Production work continues on *Levanté*, Michael’s upcoming online retreat. We are now also engaged with technical aspects and the logistics of making the retreat available.

*Levanté* will likely be comprised of a series of five-talk retreats, Michael’s traditional presentation format.

Michael shared that his VIP prayer list seems to increase by the day. He remembers those names as well as yours in quiet, on his daily walk and with a candle burning in his chapel.

## Your purchases a win-win

Thanks to all who bought journals, CDs and downloads last month. Your purchases provide valuable support for Michael’s ministry.

Remaining keepsake retreat journals are in short supply and will not be reprinted. Titles include *Cave of the Heart 2* and *3*, *Contemplative Ways of Being 2* and *3*, *Camino III* and *Celtic I*. These are valuable companions to the CDs or downloads. Visit:

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

We still have some retreat CD titles in stock, but quantities are running low. Visit:

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

All 13 of Michael’s retreats (5 talks each) are available as downloads. Visit:

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

## Thanks for your support

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

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