



Buen Camino

Newsletter of Fr. Michael Fish, OSB. CAM

Amaryllis: Blooms of renewal

For three years now, I have been gifted with an amaryllis bulb for Christmas. It comes at the beginning of Advent, a small bulb dipped in colored wax – either silver, gold, or red. All I have to do is place the bulb near a source of light, and over the coming weeks, watch as the tiny speck of green becomes a full leaf followed by a tall stalk, which then buds, and finally blooms into two to four gorgeous flowers, usually just in time for Christmas.

And then, to my surprise, after the flowers fall and the stalk is cut away, the whole process begins yet again, generally flowering for Candlemas on the 2nd of February. After the two blooms, I have placed the waxed bulbs on a table in my garden shed. I pass by the bulbs of 2021 and 2022 daily, and confess, they seemed to call to me or prick my conscience, covered, as they were, in wax.

So one day, I took a sharp knife and opened each of the bulbs, cutting through the wax covering only to find a plastic layer and then gauze. Having liberated '21 and '22, I potted them, and placed them in a sunny area. I had no hope for the bulb of '21, as after two years of encasement it was shriveled, dry, and quite dead, but, in reparation, I gave it an equal chance. Within weeks, '22 showed a tiny green leaf and now is almost about to bloom. After a month, to my utter surprise and joy, '21 miraculously also showed a tiny speck of green. By my reckoning, she should bloom around Easter, the wonder of nature and her resilience is astounding.

Watching these bulbs I can imagine a little of the joy Mary and Martha experienced when they saw their bound brother stumble from the tomb at the command of Jesus, or Mary Magdalene, on Easter Sunday morning, realizing the gardener was in reality the risen Christ.

Perhaps you have aspects of yourself waxed and wrapped on the garden shelf of your heart and life that have been there for

ages and call to you when you pass by. Would now be the time to cut them free, to unwrap and unbound them and allow any dark, hurtful, regretted, embarrassing aspects of your life or past to bloom?

Gerald Manley Hopkins, in his poem, "The Wreck of the Deutschland," points out that the word Easter is not only a noun but also a verb. To quote, "Let him Easter in us, be a day spring to the dimness of us, a crimson-crested East." Easter is a verb which can happen again and again. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Blessings,

Michael

Another little bit of Hopkins wisdom...

God's Grandeur (excerpt)

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent,
World broods with warm, breast and with ah!
bright wings.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Levanté 3 Online Video Retreat MARCH 21-27

Levanté 3 information:
<https://hermitfish.com/levant3-schedule>

Levanté 2 Online Video Retreat MARCH 14-20

Levanté 2 information:
<https://hermitfish.com/levant2-schedule>

Levanté 1 Online Video Retreat MARCH 7-13

Levanté 1 information:
<https://hermitfish.com/levant1-retreat-houses>

Michael News

We are pleased to report that Michael's latest retreat, *Levanté 4*, is nearly complete. Themes include, *Arrivals and Departures, The Sanctity of Nature, Resilience Along the Way, Learning to Rest*, and *Making Your Own Camino*. Details will be announced shortly.

Prayer appreciated for the Hermitage in Big Sur, CA, where landslides to the north on Hwy 1 have blocked access, while the southern route is still under construction.

The Lenten 'text a day' scriptural quotes remain available during each day of Lent. They're posted on hermitfish.com under the *Lectio* tab. Visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/daily-quotes-for-lent-2024>

Michael promises to remember you especially at Easter Vigil Eucharist.

'Levanté' your way

Michael designed the *Levanté* video retreats to be watched in any order. You can craft your retreat according to your schedule. For information visit:

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

Audio Subscriptions

Michael's entire audio retreat library is available online 24/7, via subscription. For information visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/about-the-audio-library>

Thanks for your support

Michael is grateful to everyone for your continued prayers, good wishes and support this past year. 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>

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