



# Buen Camino

Newsletter of Fr. Michael Fish, OSB. CAM

## Sparking the new flame

All of the month of May is “Easter Season,” culminating in the feast of Pentecost on the first Sunday of June – so perhaps an invitation and opportunity to delve deeper into the mystery of the Resurrection.

I remember reading of a beautiful custom among Orthodox Christians a few hundred years ago, this was before electricity and even matches. The villagers went to great lengths keeping a flame alive in each household for light and fire. However, on Holy Saturday, the tradition was to extinguish the carefully guarded flame so there was darkness and no heat. The people then made their way, in the dark of night, to celebrate the Easter Vigil which began with the priest, using a flint stone, sparking the new flame and fire. After the lengthy service, each family went up to the Paschal Candle and took a flame home with them. Flickering lamps and lights spreading out through the village then illuminating the houses with Easter light.

A beautiful symbol, the Resurrection transferred, enlightening individuals and families. I remember something similar, in South Africa, with German priests and sisters, how they would bless, at the Vigil, gallons of water so each family could fill a bottle and take Easter water home with them to bless their homes, crops, fields, animals, everything was sprinkled with blessed water – a spark or sprinkle of Easter symbolizing not only Christ’s resurrection from the dead but that new life in us.

Remember what Meister Eckhart said about Christmas, “If Christ is not born in you Christ is not born at all.” Well, I think, we could say the same of the Resurrection. If Christ is not risen in you, Christ is not risen. What are those sparks or sprinkles but beautiful expressions of the Spirit, who is the Risen Christ, indwelling us, warming and enkindling, refreshing and resuscitating us with new life and light.

This month let’s guard, protect and share the Christ spark in us, let’s douse and baptize everything with the Easter water of

reverence, kindness, thanksgiving and praise. Christ is risen, he is truly risen, Alleluia.

Blessings,

*Michael*

For our poem this month I share one of my favorites. I know Hopkins is not easy, as he makes up new words as he goes, but he describes perfectly the dynamic of holding and sharing the Divine spark in us.

### As Kingfishers Catch Fire

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung  
bell’s  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves — goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,  
Crying What I dó is me: for that I came.  
I say móre: the just man justifies;  
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God’s eye what in God’s eye he is —  
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men’s faces.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

## Michael news

Fr. Andrew of Incarnation Monastery, Berkeley, CA, died suddenly on Easter Sunday afternoon after a fall the previous day walking to the Vigil. His death took Easter to another level for the community. May he rest in peace. Andrew was the founder of the Berkeley house and will be missed deeply.

We are looking forward to the first *Levante 1* retreats occurring this month and pray for all who will be making the journey.

## ‘Levante 1’ retreats in May

It’s not too late to register for one of the three May *Levante 1* retreats. If you want to participate remotely you can select either May 13-15 or May 27-29.

All three May retreat centers offer on-site participation. Every *Levante 1* participant, remote or on-site, will receive a *Levante 1* Pilgrim’s Credential, five “Day” stickers and a handsome, bound blank journal (USA only) to record their thoughts.

New dates and venues will be announced soon. You can check out the most current schedule at:

<https://tinyurl.com/3j5ykv9m>

Watch the *Levante 1* preview:

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

## Grateful for your support

Michael wishes to thank 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>

### 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, [enigma.com](http://enigma.com)