



Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa Ex Corde Ecclesiae

ALL FOR JESUS, ALL THROUGH MARY

SPRING 2018

Dearest Friends in Christ,

May the Peace that only Jesus can give fill your lives this Eastertide!

Regina Coeli Jubila, Gaude Maria!

When I was in high school, I ventured into the office of one of my teachers who was a religious sister. Displayed on her neatly arranged desk was a single word, "Suscipe", written artistically in calligraphy on a sheet of parchment. She had taken the word from the Offertory of the Mass and used it as her constant prayer throughout the day. As the hours waxed and waned, Sister offered her joys, sorrows, triumphs and hardships in the spirit of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by breathing this one potent word to God. Sister's example of long ago is replicated in the lives of our Marian Sisters today as they go about their various works of the apostolate.

As you turn the pages of this newsletter and observe the prayerful labors of the Marian Sisters, know that each member of our community extends her heartfelt thanks for your spiritual and financial support which have made it possible for us to take root and bloom in this beautiful area of God's Kingdom on earth. We hope that the articles and pictures in this special issue inform you both of our apostolic labors and the Marian spirit that animates them. In all we do, we strive to be Mary's presence in the world - her hands, her heart, her voice - to all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Every day presents us with the gift of uniting our works with the superabundant graces of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for God's greater glory and the salvation of souls. May Our Lady's example and prayers ever animate these offerings that our labors may be truly pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

With Prayerful Thanks in Mary's Joyful and Immaculate Heart,

Mother Teresa Christe MSSR

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Liturgy: The Fount of Prayer

The liturgy - the fount, center, and foundation of our life - is primarily the action of Him Who Is. The salvific action of Jesus Christ, our Spouse, shapes our day and our life. Holy Mother Church, in her wisdom, gives us opportunities through the liturgical cycle to enter more particularly into each mystery of our salvation.

In Holy Week, we unite more intentionally with Christ, the High Priest - He Who prays and He Who offers sacrifice perfectly. This time, above all other times, is set aside most explicitly for sacrifice. We commemorate His great action as priest and victim, and we unite our meager efforts to His triumphant sacrifice.

Holy Thursday, the day of communion and fraternal love, is spent in a joyful spirit uniting with the Church in thanking God for the gift of the priesthood and the Holy Eucharist, culminating in our conventual Mass. Good Friday is spent in silence to contemplate the most solemn event of history. Our Lady, who alone cherished the faith in her heart on the first Holy Saturday, invites us to participate in her mourning, a mourning informed by her joyful anticipation of the coming Resurrection.

These three days lived intensely according to the mind and heart of the Church produce a "holy exhaustion." We spend ourselves with our Lord and our Lady, living with them these salvific events, delighted to offer them our every faculty and effort. This annual experience of living the mysteries of our salvation more deeply renews us in our commitment to live out of the truth of these mysteries each day and to allow them to inform our apostolates.



Beauty: The Fruit of Sacrifice

The labors of love by which the Sisters serve Christ and the Church are inspired and strengthened by the communal life we are blessed to share as Marian Sisters. Our vibrant spousal relationship with Christ inspires and renews our communal bonds. Each of the liturgical seasons shapes our life in a specific way. Lent, with its spiritual renewal through asceticism, its increased conventual silence and spring cleaning, presents us with small opportunities to grow in the spousal love which is the fundamental motivation for everything in our life. When He is the reason behind our labors, every act of self-denial naturally becomes a gift of love to the Beloved. The mortifications of Lent are offered as small gifts; they strengthen our spiritual muscles and help to open our eyes to see the beauties of the Easter Season.

We know Whom we seek. We know that every experience of beauty is an encounter with Him Who Is Beautiful, and we seek to share this knowledge of our Risen Lord. We also recognize that our present experiences of beauty are the fruit of sacrifice. Every gift, in order to be valuable, must cost the giver something - time, thought, resources. The beauty we experience each day is ultimately the result of His supreme gift given in the accomplishment of our salvation. Our ability to experience beauty requires sacrifice of us as well: sacrificing our idea of things so that we can see the beauty of His Way, sacrificing our need for haste so that we are free to encounter Him wherever He manifests Himself, sacrificing our meager gifts (given to us by Him) so that He can spread His Beauty through them. The many small opportunities for sacrifice presented each day by our life of prayer, community, and apostolate are all small gifts given to us to build the foundation for encountering the beauty of our risen Savior.



Evangelization: Mary's Hands & Heart

During the year, the Sisters are invited to give and assist at retreats throughout the diocese. This is a particular joy for us, as it is another way to live out our charism of "communicating the Beauty, Goodness, and Truth of the Catholic faith." We have participated in Confirmation retreats at several parishes, assisted at a Humboldt State Newman Center retreat, planned First Communion retreats for the Cathedral, led a Lenten retreat for Catholic school students, and hosted a retreat for a Marian Sodality.

It is beautiful to see how God will bring us to places where our charism naturally fits. No matter the topic of a retreat, it has always been in harmony with magnifying Jesus Christ through communicating the faith with a joyful spirit. We have given retreat conferences on the Holy Mass, the Sacraments, beauty, vocation, Catholic femininity, and living a life consecrated to our Lady. During these retreats, we are often able to share other aspects of our life. For instance, the Sisters were recently able to expose college students to chanting the Divine Office.



An additional joy of this apostolate is that it takes us to different areas of our expansive diocese. Since we are still a small community, our primary apostolic endeavors are concentrated near Santa Rosa, but in the last six months this apostolate has taken us to Lakeport, Arcata, Eureka, and Cotati.

Prayer is foundational for this apostolate. It is not uncommon to see a Sister preparing a retreat presentation in front of the Blessed Sacrament or the statue of our Blessed Mother. Our constitution states that "we strive to be Mary's hands and heart," and we do strive to bring her love for her Son to each retreatant on every retreat in which we are involved. We are thankful to be able to magnify Jesus Christ in this manner and pray to be worthy mirrors of our Lady.

Thank you to our Benefactors!

We would like to express our profound gratitude to our generous benefactors. Your dedication and charity have provided a beautiful convent conducive to living our life of consecration, prayer, and service.

We remember you each day in our prayers, and we beg God to grant you every grace in this life and the life to come.

May Our Lady, Cause of Our Joy, fill you with Easter joy in knowing her Resurrected Son!

