



This Sunday, we gather before dawn around a little fire. Then we light a candle and carry it into the dark chapel for a gentle service. We come out as the dawn breaks. It's one of those moments when I can feel the entire community of existence and am glad to be a part of it!

There's awareness of everything around me –

*Apple blossoms on the old tree. Rusty antique plows. The huge spruce tree we light on Christmas Eve. The sound of the gravel on the path. The cats and dogs playing around. The big brass bell brought to us from China by a ship's captain. The lavender plants. And looking up, I see on the distant hills the redwood forests. The giant trees seem to accompany me down the hill. I sense old friends who were here long before me. A carpet of wildflowers. And the peaceful, graceful, olive trees dancing in the morning breeze. The awakening birds. Everything, including my heart, is heralding the season of new life.*

How Jesus came to be still existing among us after his cruel execution I do not know, nor care. What I do know is that death was not the final word for him. And I also know that today there are

many other folks out there on many paths. We are all united in some way. Watched over by these towering trees and made happy by the flowers around us.

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*From Brother Toby's STEPPING STONES: Daily Reflections by an Unconventional Monk.*

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