



Every day the glory is ready
to emerge from its debasement.

Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav (1772-1810)

VAMOS TODOS AL BANQUETE!

You will receive this Reflection on Good Friday — a time which Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) very accurately described as *The Hour of Lead*. I do not believe she was thinking so much of the day when the innocent Jesus was executed by the powers of Rome. Emily was watching the coffins of neighbors slaughtered in the Civil War being carried down the street in front of her house to the local church. The innocent are still being abused in scores of countries. This is an “Hour of Lead” for many people even in the United States.

Recently I wrote about Óscar Romero (1917–1980) who was murdered in El Salvador for speaking out on behalf of the poor and suffering. That is still going on in El Salvador and in many other countries — including our own. Friends of Romero believe he was very aware that he would be assassinated. This was certainly true of Jesus of Nazareth and of people today who stand with the innocent against the corrupt.



But the Hour of Lead is not the end of the story. Sunday we celebrate Easter — a word derived from the Old German name for a goddess of spring.

Óscar Romero commissioned Guillermo Cuéllarand to compose a hymn to be used in a Mass “For the People of El Salvador.” It is entitled *Vamos Todos al Banquete*, “*Let Us Go to the Banquet.*” It is in popular use on Easter Sunday,



*Let us go now to the banquet, to the feast of the universe --
the table's set and a place is waiting.*

*I will rise in the early morning; the community's waiting for
me.*

*With a spring in my step I'm walking with my friends and my
family.*

*God invites all the poor and hungry to the banquet of justice
and good*

*where the harvest will not be hoarded so that no one will lack
for food.*

*May we build a place among us where all people are equal in
love --*

*For God has called us to work together and to share everything
we have.*

May it become true soon.



The Jewish commemoration of Passover is celebrated this weekend. Considering the long and violent past of the Jewish people in history that amazes me that they always seem to have hope. There were some words found scrawled on the walls of a cave near Cologne, Germany which made a deep impression on me. They were written by French Jews hiding from the Nazis but these are words that could be found today in the hearts of all the people of the Middle East and in every refugee camp in the world,

*I believe in the sun even though it is late and rising.
I believe in love even though it is absent around me.
God is silent yet I do believe.*



At Starcross we will gather before dawn around a little fire beside the chapel. We light a candle and use it to carry light into the dark chapel. It is a simple and gentle service and you will all be in our hearts. Afterwards we will come out on the deck as the dawn is breaking. It is one of those moments when a person can feel the entire community of existence and glad to be a part of it.

In the human community it is possible for a wounded person to be healed by another person. In this greater community of all life it is possible for so many things to mend us in spirit. Walking down from the chapel I have a new awareness of everything I see.

Apple blossoms on the old tree. Rusty antique plows. The huge spruce tree we light up 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, on the distant hills are the redwood forests and vineyards. The giant trees that surround us seem to accompany me down the hill. Old friends who were here long before me. A carpet of wildflowers. Camellia bushes in bloom. And the peaceful, graceful, olive trees gently dancing in the morning breeze. The awakening birds. Everything, including my heart, heralds the season of new life.



This is not a time for religious head trips. 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 other paths. We are all united in some way. Watched over by these towering trees and made happy by the flowers around us.

One way to celebrate together and for us at Starcross to wish all of you a blessed Easter is found in Ralph Waldo Emerson's (1803–1882), only slightly patriarchal, *SPRING PRAYER*;



*For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet,
For song of bird, and hum of bee,
For all things fair, we hear, or see,
Father, in heaven, we thank Thee.
For blue of stream, and blue of sky
For pleasant shade, of branches high,
For fragrant air, and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.*

Brother Toby