

May's Paschal Melodies - by Sr. Margaret Dorgan, DCM

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MAY'S PASCHAL MELODIES

During these days of Paschaltime, May breezes sing their special alleluia. New growth in fields and meadows remind us of Christ's rising as grass and flowers make their way upward through the thawed earth. Warmer rays of sunlight point to a Sun that knows no setting, Jesus, Who has now entered into the glory of His Father. Springtime in Maine has a special voice to evangelize us anew each year.

This alleluia song is one we are invited to sing not just to ourselves, humming it in private. The beauty of resurrection music is meant for all the world, its harmony joining earth to heaven.

The First Letter of Peter designates Christ's followers as "a chosen race...a people God claims for His own to declare the glorious works of the One Who called you from darkness into God's marvelous light" (1 Pt 2:9).

Pope Paul VI echoes these lines in his apostolic exhortation *On Evangelization in the Modern World*. "Those who sincerely accept the Good News, through the power of this acceptance... gather together in Jesus' name in order to seek together the kingdom, build it up and live it. They make up a community which is in its turn evangelizing."

We are told with a special insistence, "The Good News of the kingdom which is coming and which has begun is meant for all people of all times. Those who have received the Good News and who have been gathered by it into the community of salvation can and must communicate and spread it."

A commission is assigned to us as it was to Jesus' first disciples. The Trinitarian life within us is meant to affect our brothers and sisters—that is, all whom we have contact with. It is not merely through speech that we convey a message but also through our behavior, especially by the way we reach out in love to our fellow human beings. We have an obligation as those who have been cleansed with the sanctifying water of baptism. St. Paul writes "Each one of you is a son or daughter of Christ because of your faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:26).

We are appointed to unlock for others a vision of the reality given to us through the divine largesse. In the Acts of the Apostles we are designated "the children of the prophets...and heirs of the covenant" (Acts 3:25). A special grace arises from communicating the legacy of Jesus. In trying to be a channel of blessings for someone else, we ourselves are richly rewarded. A fresh understanding of what we possess is conveyed to us as we see it through different eyes. Teachers of religious doctrine in a gathering of children or of adults will conclude the session with a deeper personal appreciation of what has been presented. Parents instructing their offspring experience a fresh awakening of their own faith and hope.

Pope Paul VI says about spreading the Good News, "It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent. Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection."

The walls of our churches do not keep us apart from those who pass by on the sidewalks and streets outside. Our doors are always open to them. Welcome, welcome is the way we want to greet them.

The pope declares, "The Christian community is never closed in upon itself. The intimate life of this community--the life of listening to the Word and the apostles' teaching, charity lived in a fraternal way, the sharing of bread--this intimate life only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness....It is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelize, and the work of each individual member is important for the whole."

Spreading the Good News is a duty and a privilege Jesus gives us. We are set apart to be His ambassadors. We can respond to Jesus' appeal to reach out to others in a variety of ways. For some, this task may be accomplished through the powerful means of prayer. In His name we help the poor, the sick, those who mourn. We attempt to ease suffering. We try to add to happiness. Spending generously the inheritance we have received, we find ourselves much more wealthy in the giving.

Our Savior urges us to make known His resurrection glory to an ever widening chorus of joyful voices. Let the beauty of Maine in May arouse us to melodies of praise for the mysteries revealed through faith in the Risen Jesus.

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