

Rosemary's Ramblings

The article (*Jesus and the Undocumented Immigrant: A spiritual Geography of a Crucified People*) that Sr. Martha Del Torre, who co-leads the women's immigrant circle, brought to our attention and is in this newsletter, inspired and challenged me.

My way of seeing the world has become more and more something like the following: born from the outflowing love of the Divine, the world is embedded with that same energy (the Spirit) at its core. The historical Jesus was born as one of us. He showed us in his mission to free prisoners, give sight to the blind, bring good news to the poor that there is a cost in loving. His is a way of kenosis, emptying, and being filled from beyond the small self. When, as a consequence of being faithful to that love, Jesus was killed, he then rose because love is greater than death. He became the universal Christ, both throughout the universe and intimately part of us. He gave us the Spirit in a new way to able to find him in what is around us, especially in the poor and marginalized.

Why these people? They so clearly exemplify the people Jesus came to free and they most resemble the one who frees them.

A good question for us is how and where do we find the Christ now?
And what happens when we find and respond to Him?

In the article, Groody speaks to us as non-immigrants and develops for us the image of Christ crucified in immigrants: the people who leave their homes, leave their culture, their families, all that is familiar to come to the U.S. for the chance to earn money for love of and need to care for their families. They endure being rejected, belittled, and under constant threat of possible deportation. He sees both their physical journey and their broader circumstances as a real and current image of the crucified Christ.

If we recognize them as the crucified Christ, what begins to happen? Once I let in the reality of the suffering of immigrants' journey, I begin to be touched, disconcerted, discomforted, maybe embarrassed by all that I have. I want to respond, to learn more, to somehow ease the pain, try to take them down from an unjust and undeserved cross in whatever way I can. I join efforts to change the systemic policies that continue to contribute to their suffering. In these efforts, I begin to experience the weight of moving against the prevailing attitudes and policies of my dominant white culture and the weight of my own encultured attitudes. It is much bigger than I am, and I know my

own need to be freed – from fear, from discouragement, from anger, from whatever binds me.

At the same time, I am humbled because I see that I have a lot to learn from the trust born of immigrants' experience in being stripped and vulnerable. How can I not respect their willingness to work in low-paying, difficult, strenuous jobs? How can I not be inspired by the faith they witness? In the give and take flowing both ways, new life begins to emerge.

I become more grateful, not only for what has been given to me, but for a growing, wider kinship. I stand in awe at how much I receive from these new and growing relationships. I have things to give and things to learn. Immigrants have the need to be taken down from the cross and they have much to teach me.

Yes in the contradiction of the cross witnessed by immigrants around the world, in our letting in something of their reality and responding to it, in their being received and respected, our worlds not only cross, they interpenetrate and the Christ we seek is discovered right before our eyes as well as embedded in our core.

Who knows, with perseverance, it all might actually lead to the freedom we each need, and a diverse community experience rich in faith and mutual service.