



April 9, 2020

Dear Sisters, Associates, Consociates, 'Ohana, and Familia de San José,

As we celebrate the Triduum this year, we have received an undesired, but privileged share in the disciples' experience. Like them, we are in crisis and can't imagine what will come next. We can appreciate their sense of powerlessness as we wonder what we are called to do.

How can we further the Spirit's mission of unity while we are called to the asceticism of not being physically near one another? When we cannot participate in the sacramental celebration of the Eucharist, how are we invited to recognize and celebrate the real presence of the Risen Christ among us?

Perhaps our best scriptural mentors today are the apostolic women who accompanied Jesus on the road and remained faithful from his entry into Jerusalem through the morning of his resurrection. They accepted his invitation to discipleship, yet although he recognized their gifts, society denied them the power and status over which their brothers continually competed.

By following Jesus, they had already risked their reputations. As women, they were of little account and could accompany Jesus to the cross because they appeared to pose no threat to the authorities.

Standing in silent witness, they offered him all that was in their power: the gift of presence and loving solidarity. Thus, they prevailed with him over the powers of death and oppression.

When their hope died with him, they still chose to make the seemingly futile gesture of dignifying his death. As they planned to honor his burial, he met them in the mystery of his resurrected presence and entrusted them with the mission to proclaim the invincibility of God's love.



Like Mary of Magdala and her companions, we cannot imagine what is coming after this time of worldwide trauma. Like them, we are invited into solidarity with one another and with those who are suffering. As the divine irony played out, while the women planned to anoint Jesus' body, he presented himself to them as the living Christ, God's anointed one, and sent them out.

May we, like these Gospel women, be open to unexpected grace in the crisis of our day. Let us ask their prayer that while our churches are closed and we cannot embrace one another, we may discover newer and deeper ways to recognize the real presence of God's great love in our world. And let us remember that we are called to do this together—for the life of the world.

In loving solidarity,

*Mary*

*Patty*

*Sally*

*Sean*

*Therese*

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM