

Easter New Life

I haven't set up an altar at home.

My home surrounds me with altars--Easter altars.

Anyone who is half a gardener would have a hard time denying the resurrection. New life abounds. New life springs up, quietly, unannounced, waiting to be found, waiting to be celebrated, waiting to renew our faith, waiting to teach us lessons of life, new life--and rainy season hasn't even started yet!

A couple months ago, our neighbour, who wages war against green--against trees, against leaves, against shade--is forever attempting to de-green our yard. She dotes on asphalt, diligently watering our street out front every morning. She feels at home with cement and concrete. Since I am merely a resident, and not a citizen, and since I am merely a renter, and not a home-owner, she assumes that she has more say over my greenery than I do. A couple months ago, she sicced the street-guard on the trees over my front terrace. I was expecting a basic pruning, especially of any wayward branches encroaching on her shadeless domain. She and all my neighbours have air-conditioning, I'm sure. We don't need it, even at daily temperatures of 32C, thanks to all my foresty shade. Every visitor comments on how cool our home is, compared to anywhere else in the country. I came home to discover, to my dismay, that my entire front terrace had been deprived of all shade, left to bake in the merciless sun. I desperately watered this garden space, daily, but alas, dozens of lovely plants perished, scorched brown. My favourite plant, just outside our front door, suffered not only shade-deprivation, but the blow of a huge branch carelessly felled on it, which left it totally destroyed--crushed, smashed, kaputz--with not a hint of green left. I was too grief-stricken to go about the sad task of removing it. It remained, as a monument to environment-hating folk determined to transform our green world to grey.

Oh me of little faith. My plant, however fragile and embattled, was determined not to bow to evil forces, not to succumb to death. It had life left in it, and delicate leaflet by delicate leaflet, re-emerged from the grave, to the wondrous splendour you witness in these photos. With the sun playing on the leaves, this altar even provides images of a crown and a bell, apt for Good Friday and Easter Sunday. New life. Easter life.

On the other side of the other front terrace, neighbours had detached the attached vine, no doubt eager to free the spy window which it had gradually covered. Here, too, I was slow to chop all those dead vines down and haul them to the compost heap. Here, too, life was still in those vines. New leaves have appeared and grown. Rainy season, starting in May, will no doubt transform it, revive it, into a fully-green wall once again, beautifying one of our favourite picnic nooks.

One plant which has not suffered such calamities, but remains faithful, is that of the "monjas blancas,"--white nuns, or white sisters. These flowers endure, always vigilant. I call them Mary, Joanna, and Mary. I could call them Marlys, Gail, and Lisa, my three sisters, always vigilant. These three white sisters will be the first to witness us emerge from our covid-19 tomb, resurrected to new life.

Even "dead" plants--formerly green plants--do not lose their beauty, their charm, in my humble opinion. These change, but are not lost.

So Easter surrounds me. New life. Resurrection life.

Jesus is risen. Jesus is risen indeed. Surrounded by such Easter life, Easter altars, how could I but proclaim my Easter faith?

Celebrating new Easter life,

Brian

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