

“In the New Testament it seems that the understanding of Providence emphasizes or underlines God’s active faithfulness to the people. One is tempted to say that God’s faithful solidarity is Providence. This solidarity, however, is always incarnational. It always passes through Calvary. It becomes a promise through the resurrection.”

– Orlando O. Espin

PROVIDENCE IS PROMISE THROUGH RESURRECTION

For me, Ash Wednesday and Lent have been a time to refocus my life. It is time to ‘re-Lent.’ Literally, Lent means spring; so I need to ‘re-Spring’ my life. Ashes are suggestive of ruins and death, the residue or remains of something that has been destroyed. In the context of Lent, ashes are symbolic of remorse and repenting. Ashes are also a sign that at some previous point, there was fire ... something was burning, and now it is no longer burning. My refocusing question this Ash Wednesday ... what was burning in me that has gone out and needs to be re-Lented once again?

What I have done in previous years that still has meaning for me was to come up with an action that would become a metaphor for Spring. Early in Lent I would clean out the garage. I would take everything, and I mean every item great or small, out of the garage. I would then arrange the items in one of four categories: keep, throw out, give away, and needs repair. After a thorough cleaning of the garage, I would bring the items that I wished to keep and those that I felt needed repair back into the garage. I would pitch those items that were not worthy of any living soul, and take the remainder to Good Will. It was exhilarating. Later that evening, I would sit in my room, and reflect on what in my life I needed to keep — what was fulfilling? Then, what do I need to repair in my life, what is broken in my life? The next order was to reflect and write about what needed to be given away and what needed to be tossed out completely? I would find myself writing for hours.

The above quote about Providence and God’s active faithfulness is, for me, the stirring of a new Spring in my life. Yes, our lives pass through ashes, aka Calvary, on the way to resurrection, aka re-springing our lives over and over again until the promise and the fire are burning once again. Happy Garage Cleaning!

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