**Reflection for Monday, May 7, 2023**



Right now, the Theology and Scripture group is reading a novel by Georges Bernanos called *The Diary of a Country Priest.* In the novel, a young and unconfident priest works to figure out how, exactly, to do his job. In one passage, as he is trying to plan his daily round, he comments, “There remains the unforeseen. And the unforeseen is never negligible.”

I’ve been carrying this thought around with me all week, and not simply because I too am trying to figure out how to follow my vocation!

The unforeseen is never negligible. Though my sister was ill with cancer for many years, and though we were aware she would not survive the cancer, my first thought when my brother called me to tell me of her death was, “That’s not true.” There are things that we can never foresee no matter how inevitable they are.

How can we ever reconcile ourselves to the hard turn of the unforeseen?

Well, perhaps, with the *gifts* of the unforeseen. They, also, are not negligible.

A message from a high school friend. A conversation with my younger brother. The sudden resurgence of the memory of canoeing with my sister and friends down a calm stretch of the Colorado River.

I suppose that kind of unforeseen is what we call serendipity—when what arrives is not what we expected or desired, but reveals itself as good. Full of sadness, I go into my mother’s backyard and discover there are still blood oranges on the tree my father planted years ago. Their ruby-colored fruit and tart sweetness bring him back to life for me.

That kind of unforeseen is what I call grace.

This grace I share with you, my friends and community. Sometimes it is painful. Sometimes its rind breaks open, and bright, tangy juice touches our lips and tongue.

In faith,

Elizabeth

Our Open and Affirming Statement

*As noted in church, you will find our Open and Affirming Statement below. During June, Pride Month, we will be considering our relationship with our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, and so this is a good opportunity to revisit our statement and affirm it again or discuss whether it would benefit from a few tweaks. In the coming weeks, you are invited to read the statement over several times and, in June, enter into a community conversation about who we are and how best to offer the radical love and hospitality of Jesus.*

The Church was established as a community church, inviting all who seek to know the God of Jesus Christ to join our faith journey. Trusting in the power of God's reconciling love, we renew our founding mission, affirming each individual as a child of God. We open our family of faith to persons of every ability, age, ethnicity, family or economic status, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual or cultural origin, or any other visible or invisible difference. In the spirit of Jesus, we joyfully welcome all to full participation in the life of our church