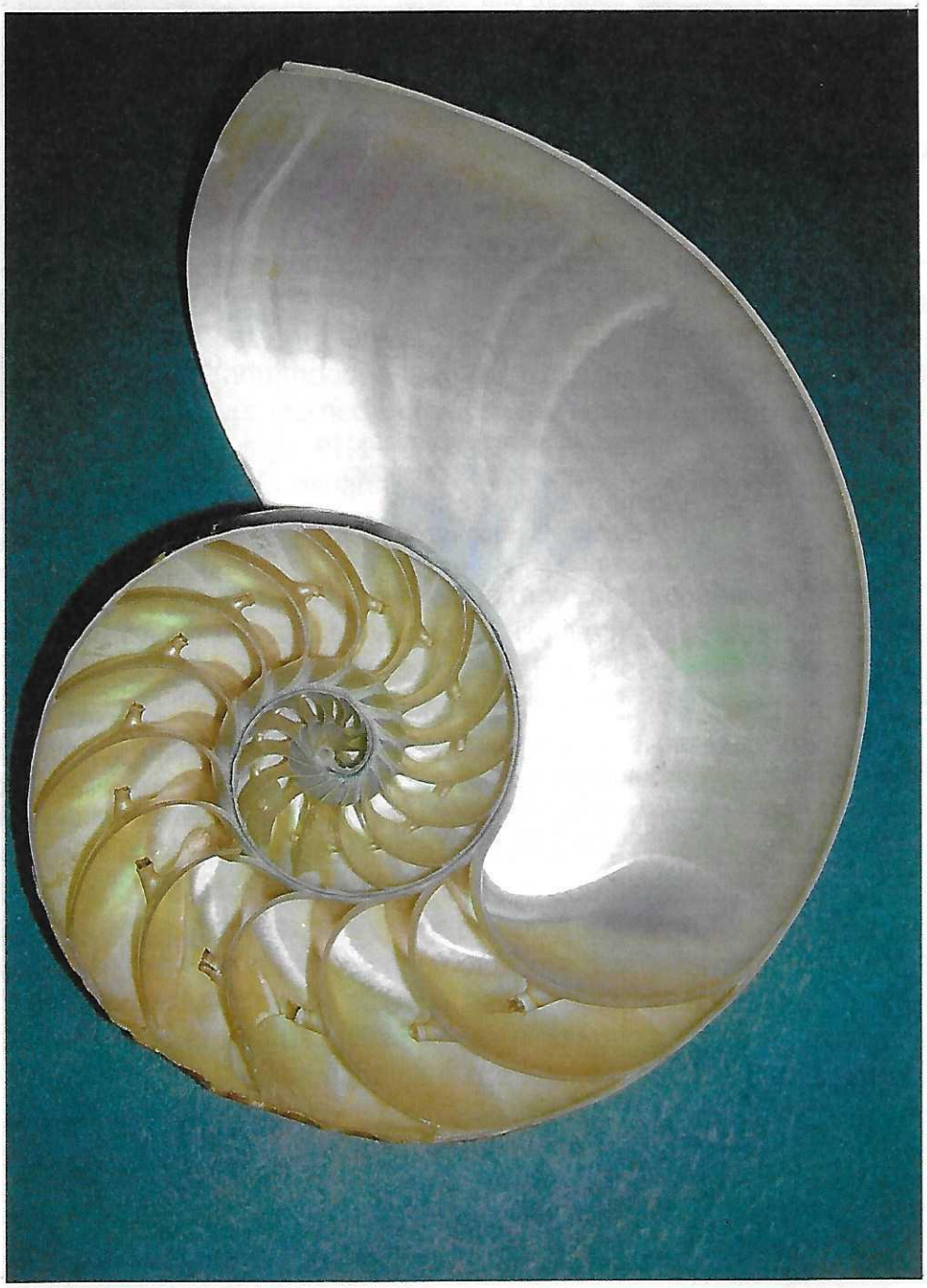
Trinitas is an Ignatian community of lay people
engaged creatively with the world

TRINITAS NEWSLETTER

Volume 2015

Birth/Rebirth



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Review of Life: We meet at 10:00 a.m. in alternate months in Ventura and Sylmar.

Trinitas Annual Corporation & Board Meeting will be on May 20, 2016 in Ventura.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The sick and those who have received prayer shawls, the deceased, all those in need, peace and justice in our time, and for vocations to the Trinitas Communities.

FOR INFORMATION ON TRINITAS:

trinitascommunity.org

For Ventura & S. Santa Barbara Counties, call Mary Ann or Nancy at (805) 659-4158.

For Los Angeles County, call Mary or Cal at (818) 367-2513.

For Spanish, and Orange County call Dolores at (714) 836-8011.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The Trinitas Newsletter is published yearly in the fall The next theme will be ***Our Trinitas Legacy.*** Articles, poems, book reviews related to the theme, news & calendar items are welcome by the September 1 submission deadline.

Credits:
Cover art, *Chambered Nautilus,* photo by Mary Ann Wixted.

ABOUT TRINITAS

We are a community of lay people who endeavor to live our Gospel commitment of poverty, chastity, obedience, and work for the kingdom by following the way of St. Ignatius of Loyola as contemplatives in action. We do this in a distinctive way by discerning how God is calling us to give our gifts in the service of bringing his kingdom to come in this world. Monthly reviews of life are at the heart of our Trinitas living. At these reviews, we pray, share, and discern together and spiritually support each other. We do not share a common ministry, but put our individual gifts at the service of the kingdom.

On March 16, 1995, the Ventura Community was recognized as an Association of the Faithful in the Los Angeles Archdiocese. Since then, we have grown to include members in Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura Counties.

Catholic in origin, we welcome all active Christian men and women, married or single, to explore membership.

Trinitas, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation in California.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS: BIRTH AND REBIRTH IN CHRIST
by Carol Cowgill

The term "born again" has become what Flannery O'Connor calls a zombie word, so lifeless that it is hard to apply it to any real experience. Sometimes, like Nicodemus, we think first of reentering the womb of some kind of cozy relationship with God. But when we look at birth from the perspective of parents (literal or metaphorical) of adult children, it clearly becomes a process beginning with birth, but then extending itself into nurture, education, fledgling and allowing /forcing those God has entrusted to us to fly away. Even then concern, anxiety about their foolish choices, and hope that they will continue to develop become the horizon. Birthing not only brings the child to the light of day, but gradually humanizes and civilizes him/her; this birthing lasts from parturition to responsible adulthood, a long frustrating process, as we contemplate the 40-year-olds who haven' yet learned to fly. This is why, through the prophets, God claims to be in labor with us (Is 42:14 and Gal 4:19). Why? Because Christ is not yet fully formed in us. For the Christian then, one's birthday is every day, a constant gestating, growing, maturing, generating in the Spirit. A transformation into Christ.

Birth into the life of the world and its values is the human condition (original "sin"). The old, dying stuff is not always sin, however; it includes psychic wounds from trauma, lack of love, aimlessness, cultural prejudices and the like. Jesus slowly brings the truth about all this into the light. Like the chambered nautilus we grow until the day our house become too constricting. Then we must grow a larger chamber, only to eventually leave it behind also. And when the process is complete, all the dead and dying stuff is left behind, leaving only pockets of corruption of heart. The rest is healthy and growing. This calcified structure remains as the shape of our birthing at any given moment. As with the nautilus, it is the autobiography of the process of transformation into the fullness of life, our personal salvation history. The shape of our soul is our unique expression of the image of Christ that is forming in us. Nothing is destroyed, because it is the shape of God's action in us, giving us new meaning and a new direction. God's Spirit in us gives us breathing space, space to spread out, new possibilitities of movement. The nautilus is the kind of creature that is always

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PROGRAMS IN OJAI

Carol Cowgill is available to offer the **19th Annotation Exercises** at St. Joseph^s in Ojai. Call if you are serious about a deeper direction to your life, are committed to set aside substantial time for contemplation, and are free to meet weekly for about 7 months. If you make the Exercises they must take priority in your prayer life. Sign up next summer. **Donation of $250**.

At St. Thomas Aquinas in Ojai:

Ignatian Contemplation in a Group Setting meets on **Thursday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00**.

Six-week **Bible Courses on Mondays at 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.** The next begins on October 26 on the Books of the Three Isaiahs.

A **Book Discussion Group** will meet on **Thursday, from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. on January 28** to discuss *The Confessions of St. Augustine.*

Call Carol at (805) 459-5689 for further information on the above.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY IN CAMARILLO & VENTURA

The **Trinitas Prayer Shawl Group** of knitters and crocheters meets on **first Wednesdays from 2:00 to 4:00**. We work, pray and share together the stories that are interwoven in the shawls. If you would like to join this ministry of comfort and compassion for those who are ill, in treatment, or grieving, as well as for those commemorating or celebrating an occasion for which this gift would be appropriate, please let Mary Ann know. If you would like to receive or send a shawl, please contact **Mary Ann at trinitascom@juno.com, or Lynn Dempsey at** lynndempsy1@me.com. We will let you know how long before your shawl will be ready. There is no charge for the shawls except the cost of mailing, but donations toward the cost of yarn are welcome.

COME . . .

UPCOMING EXHIBITS AT DEI GLORIA IN VENTURA

In the Spring of 2016, Nancy Snooks will have an exhibit of her lithographs (prints made on stone), and in the Fall, there will be a Group Show featuring work by members and friends of Trinitas. Announcements will be mailed. For further information, call Nancy at (805) 701-0386. The **Dei Gloria Studio & Gallery** is located at 4882 McGrath #160.

TRINITAS' LEGACY MEETING

The members of the Trinitas Communities will meet to pray, discern and discuss how we can pass on the legacy of our Trinitas commitment to the reign of God to others. We shall meet March 1-3, 2016, Tuesday evening through Thursday at the Siena Prayer Center in Ventura.

SOUP & SPIRITUALITY IN VENTURA

The Friends of Trinitas **book discussion group** meets with Nancy and Mary Ann at their home on **third Thursdays 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** Starting on October 15,we will be reading/ discussing ***Laudatio Si: On Care for Our Common Home,*** by Pope Francis. In January we will begin ***Jewish Spiritual Guidance: Finding Our Way to God*** by Ochs & Olitzky. The only cost to you is to buy the book. Soup is on the house! Call Mary Ann at 659-4158 for further information.

DEI GLORIA STUDIO GOES ONLINE

Nancy Snooks' etching, the *Pieta,* is in the contemporary print collection at the Vatican and her woodcut *Pieta is* in the traveling collection of Sandra Bowden, founder of CIVA. You can view Nancy's work on her website: www.deigloriastudio.com, which also links to her Flicker account where the entire archive of her work can be seen.

THE GIFT OF YEARS IN SYLMAR

Join us (Monsignor Peter Amy, Pastor Emeritus, Cal and Mary Hubbard) in celebrating the many blessings of aging. If you are 60 or older (give or take a few years!) and you would like to connect with those who appreciate God's goodness and fresh call in these later years, you are most welcome...(including newcomers, men and women!)

We meet on **Wednesdays, October 14 and November 18 from 9:30 - 11:15 a.m.** in St. Didcacus Parish Center - Room 1. Together we enjoy a sense of community, mutual support, prayer, music, scripture and small group discussions. For information call St. Didacus Parish at (818) 367-6181,

AND SEE

SLO FRIENDS OF TRINITAS

The San Luis Obispo group continues to meet in Nipomo. Mike Grahek and Miriam Gillis have begun giving the **Spiritual Exercises** using *Challenge* by Mark Link, SJ. They have two groups, one of men meeting with Mike and another of women who meet with Miriam. Bonnie Grahek is planning to begin a third group soon. For information, call **Mike Grahek** at **(805) 481-8621** or e-mail him: **slo_artist@yahoo.com**.

GATHERING OF THE CRONES

The next Gathering of the Crones at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino will be **January 24 - 26, 2026** Sunday - Tuesday. The theme is *Approaching the Center* and will be facilitated by Mary Hubbard. For information, call HSRC at (818) 784-4515.

outgrowing the status quo. Bigger, yes, but lighter. Rebirth then is a laser of truth that cross-sections everything, revealing the beautiful heart of the matter.

The nautilus, then, is constantly reborn until the end is reached and the mystery of God's action is complete. What is left behind for the rest of us to see is the shape of its having been here and having shaped our lives. Aquinas, asking why there is to be a general judgment if we are already judged at our death and are experiencing heaven (or hell), addresses this mystery. The shape of our living and the action of God's constant bringing us to new birth, cannot be fully known until the "fruits" work themselves out in history. Jesus' rebirth is not complete until the last person who lives by his Spirit is gathered home. Ditto St. Francis or St. Ignatius or we. So the chambers of our spirit just keep getting bigger until the end of human history. Then we see the full truth of God's power to make all things new in Christ, birth us yet again into fullness of life. Until then we have only tantalizing glimpses of the process, as in the haiku: "Little snail, / climb Mount Fuji,/ but slowly, slowly."

The bottom line, then: God is in labor and what he is doing in us to bring us fully alive in Christ, he wants to do in everyone. And since he chooses to work through us, he invites us to join him in the pains of childbirth and parenting, until all are brought to birth and to re-re-re-rebirth.

ALL THINGS NEW
by Soledad Marinera

When first I loved you because you loved me,
what was I thinking? Tea for two?
I didn't know your imagination and love are restless,
surging out to the whole world, the cosmos;
Dragging me along, willy-nilly.
forcing me to step out of baby love,
to enter yours,
to take my eyes off of you and me,
and coupled, create heaven and earth
new and improved.

BOXES, BAGS AND DUCKS
by Mary Hubbard

I tell the poetry group about Johnnie,
mentally ill, my son's roommate,
whose belongings were packed in a box
after he jumped to his death from a freeway overpass.

I think about my mother,
who died at 101.
Her things were gathered at the rest home
into two plastic bags.

I now muse about my and Cal's box or bag,
perhaps instead we should have packets,
packets of seed
which blow everywhere on a spirit of wind?

But then I walk above the Center pond
and laugh to see the ducks' rear ends.
The pond looks polluted,
heavy with algae, thick mottled scum.
But the ducks dive eagerly into the mess.
They, with their companions
dive and dive again, for a tiny bit of sustenance
while orange dragonflies, God's color, buzz overhead.

Clarity comes.
I am suddenly reminded
that I am not to stay with boxes, bags, or even packets;
but to join up with the ducks
and dive and dive again
to bring up bits of hope.

For salvaging joy from the muck of life
is my unique, my important call.

THE KATERI TEKAKWITHA FUND

Since its foundation by Kay Sweeney in the '90's, Trinitas has been a supporter of the education of indigenous women in Guatemala. Our current student is seventeen-year-old Sandra Cecilia Lopez Cojti, who is studying for her high school diploma specializing in medicine.

In May, she wrote" "...I am stressed with all my homework but despite this, I finish it even though I go to sleep at 3 in the morning because my great desire is to finish my career (education), so that I can help those who need it." Sandra's parents, she and her 4 brothers and 3 sisters work the earth, raising corn, potatoes, strawberries and flowers. Recently their strawberry crop was stolen. The children all go to school in the morning and help with the farming in the afternoon.

There are many young women who would benefit from financial assistance toward their education. If you are interested in donating, the Kateri Tekakwitha Fund is a 501 (c) (3) organization, Tax ID# 65-0812097. Contact Kay at:

Kateri Tekakwith Fund
P.O. Box 906
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