

INCARNATION MONASTERY

A Quarterly Newsletter

Bread of Life

Issue 15 July 2014



"The River" by Fr. Arthur Poulin

“...To live in the mercy of God.

To feel vibrate the enraptured

waterfall flinging itself
unabating down and down
to clenched fists of rock.

Swiftness of plunge,
hour after year after century,

O or Ah

uninterrupted, voice
many-stranded.

To breathe
spray. The smoke of it.

Arcs

of steelwhite foam, glissades
of fugitive jade barely perceptible. Such passion—
rage or joy?

Thus, not mild, not temperate,
God's love for the world. Vast
flood of mercy

flung on resistance.”

Denise Levertov

Letter from the Prior - The Body of Christ

Dear Oblates and Friends,

We hope you have experienced a good Eastertide, with encounters with the Risen Christ, with Mary Magdalen, the disciples of Emmaus, and Peter and the Beloved Disciple, etc. Did we encounter Jesus too? Now we enter into the time of the Spirit, of Pentecost, time of the Church, our time. If this is our time, how can we respond to the Spirit? One answer is that the Spirit brings us together as a community to celebrate the event of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. And it is this same Spirit whom we want to bring from the Eucharist into our daily lives.

How can we incarnate this Eucharist when we experience so much violence in our world--the kidnapping of the young girls in Africa; the disaster of the workers in Turkey, due to mismanagement; the violence in Santa Barbara. Even to defend people's rights we use violence. And our violence to the earth is evidenced over and over in climate change. It is good to be aware that we are incarnating the Eucharist and the Spirit even in this violent context. We are a small community but I believe that if we are faithful to our commitment--the life of prayer, life of awareness of everything around, persevering for all the rest of our lives, then we are able to celebrate the Eucharist not only in the Chapel but in the world. May the Holy Spirit help us to become a living Eucharist.

I was moved by this powerful text from St. John Chrysostom, in his homily n. 50 on St. Matthew:

"Do you wish to honor the Body of Christ? Do not despise him when he is naked. Do not honor him here in the Church building with silks, only to neglect him outside, when he is suffering from cold and from nakedness. For he who said, 'This is my body' is the same who said, 'You saw me, a hungry person, and you did not give me to eat.' Of what use is it to load the table of Christ? Feed the hungry and then come and decorate the table. You are making a golden chalice and you do not give a cup of cold water? The temple of your afflicted brother's and sister's body is more precious than this Temple of the church. The Body of Christ becomes for you an altar. It is more holy than the altar of stone on which you celebrate the holy sacrifice. You are to

contemplate this altar everywhere, in the street and in the open squares."

And so St. Teresa of Avila said, "Christ has no body now but yours."

As always, in communion. ♦



Fr. Andrew Colnaghi, OSB Cam.

Bread of Life

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Front Cover

Father Arthur Poulin, monk and artist, lives and works at Incarnation Monastery. In his contemplative process, he begins by covering the canvas with many layers of black gesso. He then adds minute brush strokes and tiny dots of color that grow into a whole through a sacred journey from darkness to light.

www.fatherarthurpoulin.org

From the Hermitage

A Celebration of Camaldolese Spirituality in Light of Evangelii Gaudium

The breeze was cool and the sun shone brightly, high in the Los Gatos redwoods, as 50 oblates and friends rekindled old friendships and made new ones during the annual New Camaldoli Oblate retreat from May 9-11, 2014, at Presentation Retreat and Conference Center.

The retreat included a keynote address by our prior, Fr. Cyprian Consiglio, OSB Cam, on the New Evangelization as seen through the lens of Camaldolese Benedictine spirituality. Fr.

Fr. Cyprian engaged the Oblates with reflections on the need for a spirituality based upon the resurrection. He recounted the necessity of beginning to live as if we inhabited a new heaven and a new earth and to live as “resurrection people in between Easter and that final day when God will be all in all.” Fr. Cyprian called us to be a people of “hope in action” while we wait for the Lord’s Second Coming as we are now Jesus’ hands and his feet and are called to be his light for the world!

In specifically monastic terms, he spoke of the inner face and outer face of our distinctive spirituality and how we are called to live out both ideals in the primacy of love as either professed monks or as Oblates.

The main focus of the retreat was continuing the work that was begun in 2013 at the Asilomar Retreat and Conference Grounds. Working groups met on Saturday afternoon to identify 3-4 new initiatives that coincided with the needs that had been identified last year: Youth and Vocations, Outreach, Management, and Oblates.

The Outreach Working Group developed new opportunities to share the charism of New Camaldoli in the wider world and at the same time strengthen the Hermitage support network. The group explored ways of making the Hermitage more accessible to those not able

to make the journey through the use of technology such as social media, online classes, talks, blog posts. The Oblate Working Group created ideas to strengthen the oblate formation program and increase the number of retreats, while the Youth and Vocations Working Group investigated ideas to increase the outreach to youth and young adults. In a sign of underlying unity, the working groups found that there was much overlap with the ideas brought forth from each group.



Coordinating Committee & monks

Overall, the weekend was filled with typical Benedictine hospitality, from the Friday evening “Happiness Hour” and meals shared with laughter and conviviality, to the liturgies presided over by Fr. Michael Fish and Fr. Raniero Hoffman. Fr. Fish also delighted us with a warm and welcoming talk on Friday night to set the mood for the entire weekend. Fr.

Robert Hale demonstrated his gifts of hospitality by acting as monk-liaison

for the Oblate Working Group. Brother Bede Healey acted as monk-liaison for the Management Working Group and preached the homily at the Sunday liturgy. Special thanks go to Bede for having the vision and drive to act as overall coordinator of the Steering Committee for our Oblate retreats and Working Groups.

Next year, our Annual Oblate Retreat will be hosted at La Casa de Maria, a retreat center in the Santa Barbara/Montecito area. The dates are tentatively set for May 29-31, 2015. We look forward to meeting you there!

Fr. Robert Hale, OSB Cam.

Michael Mullard, Oblate OSB Cam.

More info? Go to www.contemplation.com

WATER – from ‘Water: A Sacred Trust’ A Presentation for Incarnation Monastery Feb, 2014

Water is one of the most amazing, beautiful, and at times terrifying elements on Earth! One author describes water as “bubbling fresh from the imagination of the living God,” bathing the world in magnificent beauty! Call to mind for a moment some of the breath-taking waterscapes of the world. No doubt, each of us holds in our memory some body of water – a great lake, a tiny stream, or a childhood “fishing hole” – that has enchanted our hearts!

But water can also terrify us with its death-dealing force, can shock us with its wild and destructive power. Certainly the tsunami that hit Japan a few years ago, the hurricanes Katrina and Sandy that have hit our coastal areas, have sobered us with scenes of massive devastation.

One of the most astounding truths about water is that the water we drink and bathe in today, that ripples in our streams and slams into our coastal areas, is 4.3 billion years old! Water carries within itself the ancient story of life on earth and in the cosmos. Water assisted in the birth of stars, accompanied the formation of the planets, helped form and cool the Earth so that Earth’s creativity could flourish.

Water is our link to the planet’s ancient story, to its deep history, to the formation of the planetary web of life. Water invites us to listen to that story, realizing that the water that quenches our thirst today, that cleanses our bodies and waters our crops, is the same water that filled the ancient seas. Every molecule of water that exists today has been here since the planet was formed, no more no less. It’s the same water!

Water also carries within itself a biblical story. Water has been God’s agent from the beginning of creation.

As God’s Spirit moved over the face of the primal seas, water co-created with God, bringing forth all living beings at God’s command. Water partnered with God not only in creation but in the great flood, in the Exodus sea-crossing from slavery to liberation, and in quenching the thirst of God’s people as they were formed into a covenant community.

Water spoke to our biblical ancestors about how God is with us, providing metaphors for spiritual living. God is a wellspring, a healing river, an overflowing fountain. In Psalm 42 we pray, “As a deer craves running water, so my soul yearns for you my God.” Isaiah 12 promises that “With joy you will draw water from the wellsprings of the savior” – from the deep aquifers of God’s being, the ancient depths, the stored resources of God’s heart.

So many images await our contemplation in the Biblical story of water.

Water carries not only stories but a God-given wisdom that can teach us much about God’s desires for the world and for human living. In its natural integrity, water is an integral part of ecosystems that thrive on interdependence,

cooperation, relationship, mutual support. Within these ecosystems, water has a mission: to nourish, to heal, and to cleanse, enabling other creatures to flourish, to survive in times of suffering, and to rejoice in times of abundance. This wisdom is violated by our culture, which presses water into servitude, forcing it to follow laws of our own making. We need to return to water as a mentor, a teacher, and a source of wisdom.

Of all the planets in our solar system, Earth is the most saturated with water. 70 percent of the Earth’s landmass is covered with water; yet less than 3 percent of this water is fresh water, and less than 1



percent is accessible for human consumption. How easily we forget that water is finite and fragile – it is an irreplaceable gift!

All life on Earth came from the primal waters. In the great sweep of evolution, the great emergence of life began in the waters. Although the world's species developed into greater and greater complexity, all of them trace their ancestry to the great ocean womb. And in an amazing parallel, each of our lives emerged from nine months in the amniotic waters of our mothers' wombs.

We were born of water, not once but, as Christians, twice: born again spiritually into a community of faith and practice in our Baptism, a rite that took place in our local settings, with waters drawn from our local watersheds; waters that the church claims are sacramental, revealing the action of God's Spirit in our lives, in the community of faith, and in the whole of God's creation. We were born of water, and we remain water creatures: some 70 percent of the human body is composed of water. Water maintains our health at its most basic level, moving nutrients and energy between all the cells of our bodies. Water inhabits our flesh, circulates through our veins and drenches our tissues. Water is truly our sister, our next of kin! Without water, we would not exist.

And with all God's creatures, we are amazingly dependent on water. A person can live for forty days without food, but only a few days without water. In the words of poet W.H. Auden, "Thousands have lived without love, [but] not one without water."

How do these perspectives invite us to live in a drought-stricken state and a water-endangered global community? The first and foundational invitation is to *cherish* water as a sacred gift – a life-giving blessing that comes from a bounteous God whose Spirit has been poured out on the waters of the Earth since the beginning of time. Valuing, contemplating, and reverencing water; spending time in the presence of its awesome beauty, will enable us to appreciate it as a spiritual as well as a material legacy.

The second invitation is to conserve water: recognizing that it is a finite resource; using it sparingly in our homes; choosing wisely when to use it for various tasks; and learning ways of harvesting its abundance when rain falls on the Earth.

Thirdly, we are invited to protect this precious and fragile gift: safeguarding its purity, protecting both fresh and oceanic sources, and speaking out against systems that pollute, degrade, and threaten the availability of clean water for present and future generations. May we cherish God's beautiful gift every day of our lives! ♦



Mary E. McGann, RSCJ

Recommended reading on water:

Linda Gibler, From The Beginning to Baptism: Scientific and Sacred Stories of Water, Oil, and Fire (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010).

Christiana Z. Peppard, Just Water: Theology, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2014).

Incarnation Celebrates!

A Pentecost picnic, a wedding, a jubilee and more!



On May 25th oblate Leonard Capozzi married Rosana Monini at the Church of Santa Maria in Portico in Rome, Italy. Truly a match made in heaven as the couple met one year ago at the Incarnation Monastery Guest House. Leonard is a long time friend and oblate of the monastery. The couple returned to the United States long enough to again exchange vows at Leonard's home parish in Tiburon with Father Andrew presiding.



Many members of the community welcomed Leonard and Rosanna at Eucharist and then all repaired to a celebratory picnic at the Berkeley Community Garden, hosted by Karen Andrews, a member. The revelers feasted on an infinite variety of fare and fruit of the vine while being serenaded to the music (guitar and voice) of Ron San Miguel. The musical entertainment was graciously offered as a gift to the newlyweds by Veronica Mary Rolf and Family.



Finally we want to celebrate and honor the Jubilee, the 50th anniversary of vows, for both Father Thomas (above) and Brother Gabriel (Big Sur). This occurred on June 19th, the Feast of St. Romuald, at the Hermitage in Big Sur where they were surrounded in love and prayer by their fellow monks and friends.

Speaking of our own Veronica Mary, her critically acclaimed book "Julian's Gospel: Illuminating the Life & Revelations of Julian of Norwich" was published last Oct. with a second printing only a month later. The book has already received many awards including the 2014 Catholic Book Award for First Time Authors and is a finalist for the Association of Catholic Publishers' Excellence in Publishing Award in the category of biography.

Days of Prayer and Reflection

Saturday, August 23, 2014

9 am to 3 pm

Silent Contemplative Retreat

Marty Badgett

Saturday, October 18, 2014

9 am to 12 noon

“Spirituality and Personhood”

Bede Healey, OSB Cam

Saturday, November 1, 2014

9 am to 12 noon

Silent Contemplative Retreat

Marty Badgett

Saturday, November 15

9 am to 12 noon

“The Path of Beauty: Spirituality and
Creativity”

Arthur Poulin, OSB Cam

Saturday, December 6, 2014

9 am to 12 noon

“Hosea Sketches God”

Barbara Green, OP

Saturday December 13, 2014

9am to 12 noon

“The Three Comings of Christ”

Cyprian Consiglio, OSB Cam

Daily Schedule

Monday and Friday

Lauds, 7 a.m.

Short Vespers with sitting meditation, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Lauds, 7 a.m.

Vespers and Eucharist, 5 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday

Lauds and Eucharist, 8 a.m.

Vespers, 5 p.m.

Holy Days

For information about Holy Day liturgies
please visit our website

www.incarnationmonastery.com

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We appreciate and welcome any donations
toward our newsletter.

Your contributions help us provide print copies
to send to our motherhouse in Italy and to New Camaldoli
Hermitage in Big Sur.

If...

you would like to submit an idea, article, etc., for
the newsletter send to news@incarnationmonastery.org

THIRST

Another morning and I wake with thirst
for the goodness I do not have. I walk
out to the pond and all the way God has
given us such beautiful lessons. Oh Lord,
I was never a quick scholar but sulked
and hunched over my books past the
hour and the bell; grant me, in your
mercy, a little more time. Love for the
earth and love for you are having such a
long conversation in my heart. Who
knows what will finally happen or
where I will be sent, yet already I have
given a great many things away, expect-
ing to be told to pack nothing, except the
prayers which, with this thirst, I am
slowly learning.

Mary Oliver