

# INCARNATION MONASTERY

An Occasional Newsletter

Bread of Life

Issue 20 Spring 2017



‘All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.’

John 1:3-5

*circa 1990*

## Letter from the Prior Lent

Dear Oblates and Friends,

I hope you had a blessed celebration of Christmas and New Year. Though we are entering into the season of Lent, I wish to take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed 2017.

With the celebration of the Incarnation of God in Jesus the Christ, we experienced once again this mystery of the love of God become human. With the Incarnation God now has a face, a name, and so is part of creation, of humanity. God no longer is just transcendent, 'in the heavens,' but rather became visible, touchable, humanly present in creation. So we are challenged to ask ourselves, have we been silent about the many injustices of the past: the slaughter of native Americans in this land, the institution of slavery, the absence for so long of basic civil rights for women and gays and other minorities. And in our time, where are we? Are we silent to the cry of the multitude of immigrants fleeing from war and oppression? Where are we now with a new, very new situation after the elections?

Again, God now has a name, a face, and Jesus identified himself with the poor, the oppressed. Do you remember that passage in the Gospel of John (1:38) when two of the disciples asked Jesus, 'Where are you staying?' They didn't ask, 'Where are you from?' but rather 'Where are you staying?' And Jesus replied, 'Come and see.' They went and they ended up abiding with him. And we are to abide with him and be present with him certainly in prayer, meditation, community life, but also with the Incarnate Word with the homeless, the immigrants, and all suffering on the margins of our society, and the suffering of nature itself. Certainly there is a power of the Transcendent God, but also by God's Grace, a power of humanity, of each of us.

Let us never forget that through our Baptism we receive the Holy Spirit; and St. John writes that we are children of God and rivers of living water (of mercy and love) can flow from our hearts. That is our reality that we should never forget. We can do our bit to change the world. We monks and oblates and friends are all involved in the power of the Incarnation of God; to be present, each with our different charisms.

Now as we enter our season of Lent, many all over the world will be preparing to receive the sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation at the Easter Vigil. Others of

us continue over these 40 days, perhaps deepening our relationship with God through prayer, reflection, self-examination, repentance, service. May our 'days in the desert' bring us to conscious renewal of our own Baptism and life in the Risen Christ.

Blessings and prayer for 2017 and the Lenten journey. ♦



*Father Andrew Colnaghi, OSB Cam.*

## Brother Bede

*You may have noticed a new monk around the monastery lately, Br. Bede Healey, who is in the process of making Incarnation his new home. Thinking I might not be the only one curious about Br. Bede and what brought him to Incarnation, I sat down with him recently and explored this and other questions.*

I already knew Bede was an avid chef and baker who enjoyed the good things of life. Turns out there is an interesting history to this. Br. Bede grew up in what he describes as a 'Catholic ghetto' in Milwaukee, WI. His family was deeply involved in parish life - even New Year's Eve was spent at the parish hall. He attended Catholic schools and lived across the street from the local convent. The Sinsinawa Dominican sisters were wonderful teachers and were foundational to Bede's joyful appreciation of religious life. Early on they taught him the value of the deep mutual bonds that can develop between religious and lay people when the sisters would call his father and say they were out of 'holy water'.

Bede's father would happily bring over a case of beer and soon the empty bottles graced the Healey family's garbage so that the neighborhood garbage collector wouldn't think the nuns were indulging. Perhaps because of this, Bede has never seen religious life as overly rarefied or ascetic.

In his early twenties, Bede worked as an assistant dean at Webster College, a Catholic school in St. Louis, founded by the Sisters of Loretto. The Sisters were based in Kentucky and in fact, donated the first parcel of the land that became the Abbey of Gethsemani. Webster was run by a lay board - another lay/religious partnership - and classes were taught by a mixture of lay and religious professors. What Bede took away from this encounter with the Sisters of Loretto was that being a vowed religious and being a professional were not incompatible. This experience also added to the importance of women religious in Bede's life and in fact his first spiritual director was a religious sister, not a monk.

Given his expanded understanding of what was possible in religious life, he joined St Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas in 1981 and took first vows in 1982. He was deeply drawn to these Benedictines and entered a life of community, scholarship and liturgical prayer. During this period, Br. Bede attained his PhD in psychology. While enjoying a great deal of professional success as a clinical psychologist and professor at Menninger Clinic, as well as in his work training chaplains for the Defense Department, Bede began to feel over involved in his professional life and under involved in his monastic vocation.

It was this striving for a more contemplative life that led him to the Camaldolese Hermitage at Big Sur. He first learned of the Hermitage from Peter-Damian Belisle, Camaldolese monk and author who thought Bede might appreciate the solitude of the Hermitage. And then Bede traveled to Big Sur to give a workshop and as many do, fell in love with the place - the solitude, the beauty, the liturgy and the community. Interestingly, our own Fr. Arthur Poulin was at Big Sur at the same time, also called to the contemplative way of the Camaldolese.

The Camaldolese charism is perhaps unique in recognizing both eremitical and communal life as well as the need to evangelize or share the message of the

Gospel. Still, sustaining a monastery is no easy task, especially on the rugged coast of Big Sur where the monks have to essentially run a small city to ensure water, power, and food. All that of course, requires adequate finances. Bede was quickly thrust into the business aspects of running the Hermitage along with his work with vocation, formation and oblates. During his years at Big Sur he maintained his abiding interest in the intersection of spirituality and psychology and was an active and popular retreat leader.

Br. Bede has given considerable thought to the future of the Camaldolese, at least the American Camaldolese which differ from the Italian in the strength and number of oblates. As religious orders have experienced significantly smaller numbers in the past decades, many have transformed themselves by handing off core functions and governance to the laity. We see Catholic universities - such as Webster and many others - and Catholic hospitals now run by lay boards and administrators who are trained in mission and values by religious. So perhaps with the American Camaldolese presence on the west coast of California. Br. Bede sees the possibility of a few monks maintaining and sustaining not so much the physical monasteries but the charism, inculcating the Camaldolese Benedictine way of life into the culture through the vibrant oblate communities associated with each house. He has proposed for

example that a lay board could run the Hermitage freeing the brothers to focus on carrying the torch of their spirituality forward and outward in a mutually beneficial relationship with the laity. Bede feels the core monastic obligation is to carry that Camaldolese Benedictine charism forward.

Meanwhile, the movement of the spirit in his own life has brought Br. Bede to Incarnation Monastery and to the thriving academic cultures of the Graduate Theological Union, the School of Applied Theology and the University of California. In this new urban mix, Br. Bede leans into his own core charisms of teaching, leading retreats and offering spiritual direction and counseling. How lucky are we to have him among us! ♦



*Brother Bede Healey, OSB, Cam.*

*Bobbe Rockoff, Oblate, OSB Cam.*

## Casa de Clara Catholic Worker



*Dorothy Day*

Dorothy Day (1897-1980) was an oblate of the Benedictine monastery, St. Procopius Abbey, in Illinois. She was principally responsible for launching the Catholic Worker movement in Depression era New York City, which began with a newspaper (*The Catholic Worker*) that analyzed the issues of the day, particularly those affecting the working poor and the destitute, from a distinctly Catholic perspective. She helped establish Catholic Worker houses of hospitality that fed and sheltered those in need, where resident volunteers practiced voluntary simplicity, shared goods in common, and lived with many whom they served. She adhered firmly to gospel nonviolence and was instrumental in reviving the pacifist tradition of the church. She was a strident activist who could often be found on the picket line or, on occasion, in a jail cell, advocating for the poor and for peace. Amidst all of this, she maintained a fervent prayer life, each day attending Mass, practicing silent prayer, and praying the Liturgy of the Hours. Today, her legacy lives on with approximately 200 Catholic Worker houses of hospitality worldwide, including rural farm communities.

My wife Lisa and I have been living in a Catholic Worker house of hospitality in San Jose, Casa de Clara, for the past year and a half. As Camaldolese oblates living in a house of hospitality, we are grateful to live a form of 'monasticism-in-the-world' that incorporates some of the structural aspects of monastic life, such as communal living, common prayer, sharing goods and resources in common, and, what is the hallmark of



*Julian, Lisa, Fumi and Andrew  
Catholic Worker Residents of Casa de Clara*

Catholic Worker houses, offering hospitality to those on the margins. In particular, we provide temporary housing for women and children experiencing homelessness and accompany them as they move toward greater stability, security, and self-determination in homes of their own.

Casa de Clara was founded in 1977 when our large, lovely Victorian house in downtown San Jose was purchased and, soon thereafter, an extension built for the purpose of providing hospitality. Today there are four of us Catholic Workers who live here full time. Most days begin for us at 7 a.m. with an hour of shared silent prayer and end with evening prayer. In between, we are engaged in a variety of activities: we attend to the needs of the women and children who stay with us; we run a shower ministry, bringing our 2-unit shower trailer to various locales so that people experiencing homelessness can take a hot shower; we distribute food to low income families in our neighborhood; we serve those who come to our door for a sleeping bag, socks, food, or simply a listening ear; we prepare dinner and eat family-style with our guests five evenings a week, among a host of other tasks.

In the prophetic spirit of Dorothy Day, we also engage in activism. We attend a monthly prayer vigil (weekly during Advent and Lent) at Lockheed-Martin in Sunnyvale, protesting the manufacture and trade of weapons of mass destruction. We have participated in actions at Santa Clara University calling into question

the moral appropriateness of a Catholic university offering military training in the form of ROTC. And recently, a few of us have travelled to North Dakota and participated in local actions supporting the Standing Rock Sioux tribe in their efforts to protect their land, water, and sacred sites from threats posed by the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline.

We are also a lively hub for the local community, who support us financially, volunteer with us, eat dinner with us and our guests, or join us for our Friday evening prayer group, monthly Mass, and other events. We receive a steady flow of students from nearby Catholic high schools who come to learn about our way of life and help in our various ministries. Groups from local parishes participate with us, such as our beloved 'food angels' who purchase food for the house each week. In all of these ways, we sustain a healthy connection with a wide range of people, who in turn are nourished by their contact with us and those we serve.



*Monthly Mass at Casa de Clara*

As a married couple, Lisa and I are grateful that our lives have been uniquely shaped by these two streams of spiritual tradition, Camaldolese and Catholic Worker. Camaldolese spirituality connects us to the invaluable contemplative gifts of our faith, in the context of a warm monastic family, while Catholic Worker provides us with a prophetic, communal way to live out of the depths we touch in contemplation. As so many today long for meaning, depth, coherence, and a way to affect positive change in our broken world, we are thankful to have discovered a way of life that helps us to more fully and faithfully 'prefer nothing whatever to Christ' (Rule of St. Benedict, Ch. 72). We warmly invite you to visit! ♦

*Julian Washio-Collette, Oblate, OSB Cam.*

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## **INCARNATION MONASTERY**

### ***Ash Wednesday through Easter***

Ash Wednesday  
 Distribution of Ashes  
 March 1, 5 p.m.

Reflections on John's Gospel  
 Sandra Schneiders, IHM  
 Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m. to noon

Lectio Divina in preparation for Easter  
 Tuesdays in Lent at 7 p.m.  
 March 7, 14, 21, 28; April 4

For a Spirituality of Incompleteness  
 Ivan Nicoletto, OSB Cam  
 Saturday March 25, 9 a.m. to noon

Half Day Silent Contemplative Prayer  
 Marty Badgett, Oblate, OSB Cam  
 Saturday, April 8, 9 a.m. to noon  
 \$20 Suggested Love Offering

Palm Sunday  
 April 9: Mass 8 a.m. Blessing of palms, procession  
 Vespers, 5 p.m.

Holy Tuesday  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation  
 April 11, 7 p.m.

### ***The Paschal Triduum***

Thursday of Holy Week  
 Mass of the Lord's Supper and Washing of Feet  
 April 13, 7 p.m., followed by silent adoration

Good Friday  
 April 14: Morning Lauds, 7 a.m.  
 Proclamation of the Passion, 7 p.m.  
 Universal Prayer and Adoration of the Cross

Holy Saturday, Easter Eve  
 April 15: Lauds, 8 a.m. with Anointing  
 The Easter Vigil 8 p.m.  
 Ceremony of fire and light, Proclamation of the  
 Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Exulted)  
 Vigil of Readings - Blessing of Water - Holy Eucharist

Easter Sunday  
 April 16: Mass of the Day of Resurrection, 11 a.m.;  
 Vespers of Easter, 5 p.m.

## Three Monasteries - One Community

(Reprinted with permission from New Camaldoli Hermitage Newsletter, Fall 2016)

### *Message from the Prior*

‘Though we are many, we are one body’ (Romans 12:5)

Though we live in different locations, we more and more think of ourselves as one community stretched up and down the coast of California. Up north, our Frs. Andrew and Arthur along with our Italian brother Ivan have a thriving ministry with our oblates at Incarnation in Berkeley. Br. Bede has moved up to be with them this fall as well.

Down south in San Luis Obispo, Frs. Ray and Stephen are about to make their solemn transfer from the Olivetan Benedictine Congregation to ours this coming January, so the Monastery of the Risen Christ, with our Fr. Daniel at the helm, will be an official Camaldolese Monastery very soon.

And of course Fr. Michael Fish continues in hermit-preacher-wanderer mode based in the hills above Santa Cruz. New Camaldoli feels more and more like a mother house or, as one of our friends likes to say, ‘the Mothership.’

Cyprian

**INCARNATION MONASTERY**, Berkeley, California  
[www.incarnationmonastery.org](http://www.incarnationmonastery.org)

Incarnation Monastery was founded November 28, 1979 by the Camaldolese motherhouse, Monastero di Camaldoli, Italy. Fr. Robert Hale arrived from Italy first, in this ‘Ecumenical Joint Community’ with the Holy Cross Episcopal brothers. In January of 1980, Prior General Dom Benedetto Calati, Emanuele Bargellini and Innocenzo Gargan visited and met with Catholic Bishop Cummins, receiving recognition of the community from the Diocese of Oakland. August 14, 1981, marked the arrival of Fr. Andrew Colnaghi from Italy, growing the Camaldolese portion of the joint community to two monks.

Fr. Robert initiated the Oblate Program while at Incarnation Monastery; later this was also adopted at New Camaldoli Hermitage. Between the two, over 700 hundred people have become oblates.

**NEW CAMALDOLI HERMITAGE** (Immaculate Heart Hermitage), Big Sur, California

[www.contemplation.com](http://www.contemplation.com)

New Camaldoli Hermitage was the first Camaldolese foundation established in the United States. In 1958, Italian monks Fr. Augustine Modotti (a former recluse at the Sacro Eremo, Camaldoli, who ‘delighted to be a part of the founding of an American hermitage,’ according to Fr. Robert), Fr. Adalbert Paulmichi and Fr. Andrea Agnoletto (my ‘grandfather!’, who I met in 2008 in Camaldoli) came to the Hermitage’s present location in the Santa Lucia Mountains overlooking the Pacific Ocean. On July 29, 1958, Bishop Willinger, of the Monterey Diocese, gave canonical approval to New Camaldoli Hermitage.

**MONASTERY of the RISEN CHRIST**, San Luis Obispo, California

[www.monasteryrisenchrist.com](http://www.monasteryrisenchrist.com)

On January 6, 2017, Monastery of the Risen Christ was received into the Camaldolese Congregation. Fr. Daniel Manger, OSB Cam, has been appointed vice-prior and Br. David Meyers, OSB Cam, joins him there. Fr. Ray Roh and Fr. Stephen Coffey were received as Camaldolese monks. Shortly after, on February 8, 2017, Fr. Ray passed into eternal life. There is a large group of Camaldolese oblates at San Luis Obispo (originating from the Hermitage under then-oblate chaplain, Fr. Michael Fish, OSB Cam). Monastery of the Risen Christ, as an Olivetan monastery, also had a sizeable oblate community spread throughout California and under the guidance of Fr. Stephen.

### *Journey Down the Coast of California*

Imagine my surprise in 2003 to discover a Camaldolese monastery in Berkeley! Didn’t they live in Big Sur, where I’d heard retreatants had their own private gardens overlooking the ocean?

In Berkeley, I was drawn to the slow, quiet contemplative liturgy of Incarnation Monastery. The silence was ‘music’ to my ears and heart. I felt close to God and ‘at home.’

The Camaldolese chant was new to me but I learned from the monks and my fellow contemplatives. Poring through the old spiral-bound Lauds and Vespers book, I soon was able to ‘pray’ as I chanted.

After about six months, I finally had my first opportunity

to visit New Camaldoli Hermitage in Big Sur, attending the preached retreat of Frs. Andrew and Arthur and oblate Toni Betschart. Preceding this retreat on Beauty was my harrowing hours-long drive to the Hermitage on a dark, rainy night. Arriving exhausted and disoriented (the black ocean merging into the black sky), I knew every subsequent drive to the Hermitage could only be better (and this has proven true).

The next morning, entering the church for liturgy, I saw twenty-five monks robed in white (I had not yet learned to distinguish anyone). Circled in the rotunda, the monks' deep and vibrant chanting reverberated throughout my entire body and transported me to an ancient time deep within.

Over the years I've traveled frequently, the now-familiar route between Incarnation Monastery and the Hermitage. Then in May of 2016, I realized while on retreat at the Hermitage, 'I am half-way down the coast to visiting my niece in southern California. To break up the still-long drive, why not stay at Monastery of the Risen Christ in San Luis Obispo?' Leaving the Hermitage, I turned south down Highway 1 and in a couple hours of pleasant and scenic driving I was there.

Although I had seen photos of various parts of Monastery of the Risen Christ, nothing prepared me for when I turned off the road and saw for the first time this

mountain, Cerro Romualdo, with a monastery partially up the path. It was grand, majestic and so stunningly quiet. A huge labyrinth welcomed me at the base of the long path. Continuing up the path, I was greeted by Fr. Daniel Manger, whom I knew from the Hermitage, and brought to my 'room' (similar to a one-bedroom apartment). Shortly after, I ventured into the chapel, wondering where to sit? As soon as the chant began, I felt right at home: the chant was from the Camaldolese Lauds and Vespers book! I was in a monastery unfamiliar to me, but the liturgy was a continuation from earlier in the day at the Hermitage.

In my brief retreat at Monastery of the Risen Christ, I had plenty to explore. First was the labyrinth, the largest I've ever walked. Alone and unhurried, I was free to meditate and revel in the beauty surrounding me. From the labyrinth, I walked the Stations of the Cross as they guided me up the hill, returning me to the monastery. Above the monastery I explored one of the walking trails, affording great views of the valley below. Refreshed and rejuvenated from my truly quiet and peaceful adventure at Monastery of the Risen Christ, I again continued south down the coast of California.

Whether you are traveling north or south, why not visit the Three Camaldolese Communities on the Coast of California? ♦

*Jacqueline Chew, Oblate, OSB Cam.*



*Incarnation Monastery monks, oblates and inquirers celebrate their first official 'Oblate Day' on Nov. 5, 2016*

i thank You God for most this amazing

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any—lifted from the no  
of all nothing—human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

e.e. cummings

## Bread of Life

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for information about coming events

[www.incarnationmonastery.org](http://www.incarnationmonastery.org)

## An Exhibit by Fr. Arthur Poulin Coming Soon!

Original Paintings and Giclees  
on  
Canvas, Paper, and Wood

Robert Mondavi Winery, Napa Valley  
Date To Be Announced

[www.fatherarthurpoulin.org](http://www.fatherarthurpoulin.org)