

---

---

TRANSFIGURATION  
HERMITAGE  
is a  
tax-exempt  
non-profit  
Catholic institution  
within the  
Diocese of Portland,  
Maine.

---

# The View

## NEWSLETTER



Vol. 24 No. 1  
March 2019

205 Windsor Neck Road \*\*\* Windsor, ME 04363 \*\*\* 207-445-8031  
[www.transfigurationhermitage.org](http://www.transfigurationhermitage.org)

---

# *On Feeling Anxious*

I have been pondering the outbursts of violence that occur with relentless regularity these last few years. It appears as though we see them more and more often, that it's not just the ubiquitous news reports that make it seem this way. We hear about school shootings, mass shootings, terrorist attacks, super strong hurricanes, wildfires that wipe out entire towns—the list grows and grows and grows. And of course there is the daily bombardment of news about sex abuse within the Catholic church. In the midst of this barrage of horrific news, how is it possible not to grow anxious and fearful?

These events are often traumatic. They can arise unpredictably and suddenly, leaving victims with little or no time to prepare or to escape. They are overwhelming, and can wipe out the human capacity to endure, to rise above, to contextualize them into ordinary daily life. In doing so, they can leave a residue of uncontrollable fear and anxiety in their victims. They leave PTSD—post traumatic stress disorder. PTSD is an anxiety based illness; a person suffering from it may have intrusive memories of the event; may often develop strategies to avoid anything reminding himself of the event; may have enhanced negative thoughts and moods, such as helplessness and hopelessness, and various emotional reactions. Not all people develop PTSD, especially if they find help and relief from others soon after, and if they are blessed with

natural strengths and resilience. But many are not blessed in these ways, and suffer inordinately afterwards.

PTSD was first understood and diagnosed in soldiers returning from combat. At one time it was called 'shell-shock.' Until the post-Vietnam era, it was unfortunately misunderstood as a moral lack, a failure on the part of the individual, who should have been stronger, tougher, more able to rise above it. In the 1980s psychologists and doctors began to understand that children at risk of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; or adults, especially women who have been raped or sexually and physically abused, are also at very high risk of developing PTSD.

I have myself been diagnosed, as long ago as the early 90s, with PTSD, which arose as a result of childhood craziness and chaos. Although I have for decades successfully understood and dealt with the symptoms, a substratum of anxiety has always remained. For example, to this day, I begin to feel anxious when surrounded by strangers in a busy supermarket or department store.

Over the winter, I have been dealing with the emotional reaction of learning that a much loved friend has a serious illness. The worst crisis has passed, but she faces a long road of recovery. During this time, my anxieties increased exponentially, as I worried about how she could find a path forward with her crippling disease. At the same time, we have been both blessed and bothered with a

new addition to our community—a young and very high-energy puppy, who Sr. B has named Lina. She has more than a bit of the devil in her, and she brings more than a bit of chaos to our living situation. For me, that translates as anxiety. This may not seem reasonable—but then, emotions aren't usually reasonable. They're just emotions. But we have them, and we need to recognize them and cope with them.

What does all of this have to do with my faith? With your faith?

Hopefully, anyone reading this does not have PTSD. Even so, most of us can experience crippling fears and anxieties from time to time. How do we deal with them? Psychology can give us tools for this, but our faith can also provide tools and even more, give meaning and value to all that we suffer from fears, anxieties, and angst.

One of the first and perhaps most important things we can do is to soothe ourselves. Like a good mother, soothing an infant, we need to soothe the hurting, fearful part of ourselves, the part that is so anxious, fearful, angry, sad or hopeless. We need to just 'be there' for ourselves! Perhaps you are thinking, 'this sounds self-indulgent,' and perhaps it does sound that way. But in reality, the part that is so fearful, angry, sad, or hopeless can **not** be an adult at just that moment. We may have regressed to an earlier state, a time when we needed help and didn't receive it. So now we need to give ourselves the help we need. We

need to practice self-care. That commandment to love says, 'love your neighbor *as yourself*.' So first I need to love myself properly, as the Lord would have me do. We need to be kind to ourselves, to not judge ourselves. We need to notice how we feel, and then just *be with* ourselves in that moment, without judging, without condemning, without thinking, 'I should be able to rise above this.'

A second thing we can do when we are very anxious, fearful, sad, or in the grip of any overpowering emotion is to find supportive people: friends, family, or perhaps group support. We need to know that we're not alone, that others struggle with the same issues, that there is hope and help.

Finally, and most important, we need to take refuge in our faith. We need to ponder on the God who went to his death to help us, who is *with us* in our fears, our weakness, our neediness. The God who in Jesus let himself become needy, helpless, and weak, and so completely understands whatever it is that we're going through. The God who in Jesus is *with us* in our times of need, and who completely understands that we need to be *with* ourselves.

'Psychology can give us tools,' I said to someone recently. 'But it is God who can truly heal us.' As we enter into Lent, and look forward to Easter, let us remember while in our Lenten times that the God who rose from the dead can also bring new life to birth in us, no matter how hopeless at times we feel ourselves to be.

PS. A word to those who are concerned for me: I'm fine! Let's just pray and support those who continue to struggle with this crippling illness.



We are so delighted and amazed at the generosity of God, expressed through the deep faith and overflowing love of our late friend **Jan Halloran-Dahl**, her father **Joe Weronko**, and her husband **Dr. Bernhoff Dahl**. Tragically, Jan died suddenly and unexpectedly in January 2018. She died intestate, but had often expressed to her husband and father that she wanted some of her estate to go to us. They honored her wishes, and this January the legalities were finally completed. Jan's incredibly generous bequest enabled us to pay off the mortgage on our wonderful chapel – where she had already made donations in memory of her brother and her first husband. Miraculously, we are now mortgage free!

Jan's bequest does not help us with our operating budget, so we still need to work hard with bake sales and fruitcakes—and we still depend on your continued generosity. But living without a mortgage takes off an enormous amount of pressure.

I know that Jan would want me to say that all of you who have contributed, both large amounts and small, are just as important in God's eyes—and in ours. Here is the list of other people who have recently helped us pay for our chapel. All of you who have contributed have helped bring this chapel into being. And all of you are remembered in our prayers many times each day in the chapel.

## GAIL'S FUND BENEFACTORS

**Nov 2018 – Jan 2019**

Angela Gilladoga, MD  
Dick & Sharon Marchi  
Janice Mellyn  
mem Larry  
Al Parker  
mem Anne Springer,  
Gail Parker & Alfred Marchi  
Irene Siket  
David Smith, SWM

## IN KIND DONATIONS

Alyne Anderson  
Cecile Bouffard  
Peter & Rosemarie Felt  
Ellyne Fleshner  
Barbara Gawle  
Thomas Goyne  
Sue Kenny  
St. Denis Knights of Columbus  
Al Parker  
Roger Pomerleau  
Lynne Swanbeck  
Gunner Wood

## TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE

**needs your generosity and  
support**

**for continued growth.**

**Please use the enclosed  
envelope**

**or visit our online shop  
at**

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

We also are building an endowment fund for future growth. Please consider remembering us in your bequests, legacies, trusts, transfers, gifts.



## RETREATS

In spite of cold and wintry weather, we've had a number of people who made the trek to Windsor, Maine for a retreat! We do ask for a two-night stay during the colder months, to make it worthwhile to turn up the heat, and we do ask a one-night deposit—which can be used on another date if the weather makes arrival by car impossible.

Our prayer trail still beckons to those with snowshoes or cross country skis. The quiet of the retreat house invites prayer and reflection. Treat yourself to some quiet time for rest and reflection, in tune with the quiet, reflective season of winter in Maine.

Our nominal offering is still only \$50/night and we still offer Sr. Bernadette's wonderful home-cooked meals!

For more information or to register,  
please call  
207.445.8031  
or email

[retreats@transfigurationhermitage.org](mailto:retreats@transfigurationhermitage.org)

*Also*

St. Moira Retreat House is available year round for private and small group retreats.

*FMI call or email us as above*



Photo courtesy of Norbert Leser



Retreat House Interiors courtesy of R&P Powis

# FEEDING THE SOUL

## 2019

### FOCUS ON FORMATION

#### 'A Tiny Cat in a Big World'

It was one overcast morning when I took a stroll and introduced Br. Benedict to another part of the Hermitage property, the stone wall.

A week before, he was still this timid 10-month old kitten who had never been outdoors all his life, who sheepishly tried to step on green grass for the first time and quickly ran back inside to his comfort zone, indoors.

So as we both walked along the stone wall, as afraid as he was, yet knowing that there was this huge towering human who would protect him from harm, he fought his fear and started to leap around, exploring his new territory. It struck me that I too was often afraid to cross the boundary, to explore new horizons, yet one thing I need to hold in faith, that the Lord will always be with me to guide me and protect me. 'The Lord is your guard and your shade, at your right side he stands.'

His perseverance and his strong will to find his identity as a cat, a hunter in the wild, bore fruit. As of now, he cannot get enough of being outdoors and even learned to pronounce the word 'OUT' (without the 'T'!). He has been warding off squirrels and catching mice, moles, and chipmunks on a regular basis. And so I also at a certain stage in my life was struggling to find my true identity, who I truly am as God created me, and not as society dictated me to be. 'In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.' (Jn 16:33)

Finally, I thought that I was a superior being to four-legged animals. But it turned out that I knew very little about God's creation. What do I know, there is so much I could learn from this fascinating little creature of God!

Sr. Scholastica

Yes, *Feeding the Soul* is back! And better than ever! After much prayer and discussion, we decided that an external site is just not right for this wonderful event. So we are now planning to hold it here at the Hermitage on Aug 4, 2019 at 2PM. We'll be under canopies, in case of rain, but we are hoping that the Lord will send us a bright sunny day—as He has for each of the three blessings of the different stages of construction while we were building the Hermitage.

Our theme this year is 'The Quest for Silence in a Noisy World.' We'll once again have the inimitable **Gary Crocker**, Maine humorist and speaker to kick off the presentation. Then **Jane Brox**, who recently discussed her new book *Silence* on Maine Public Radio, will deliver the major address. Jane is a noted Maine author and speaker, winner of the New England Book Award for nonfiction and the L.L. Winship/PEN New England Award. Jane has also written *Clearing Land: Legacies of the American Farm* and *Brilliant: The Evolution of Artificial Light*. I will MC and also offer a very brief reflection on silence and its importance in the spiritual path.

But there's more! This time we'll have a small farmers' market, with booths set up featuring Maine grown and Maine made products. We'll have samples from local restaurants, featuring 'afternoon tea' goodies, and we'll have Sr. Bernadette's amazing foods also for sale. We'll have music as well, though we're not sure yet if it will be live or recorded. And of course we'll be raffling off gift baskets!

Admission is free, though we'd be grateful for your donation to help cover costs. We'll have much more info in the next newsletter, and if you live locally, you'll no doubt begin to see posters in various windows, beginning this summer. So save the date! And join us for a look at the Hermitage, and a wonderful, fun summer afternoon.

### HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE, 2021

As reported in the last edition of *The View*, I walked where Jesus walked in the Holy Land. The intensity of the pilgrimage schedule and the crowds of other pilgrims meant that we saw many holy sites, but at an intensive pace, leaving little time for prayer and contemplation.

I've been working with Scott Dow and Transformation Travel to plan an ecumenical contemplative pilgrimage to the Holy Land that will allow time to walk where Jesus walked, sit where Jesus sat, and pray where Jesus prayed. I invite you to consider joining our small group when we make pilgrimage in Feb 2021 for a truly prayerful encounter with Jesus in his native land.

Our tentative plan is to fly overnight from Boston to Tel Aviv on Feb 13, 2021 (during school break). We plan to stay on the shore of the Sea of Galilee at Magdala while we visit holy sites in Galilee. Of course we'll begin at the Mount of Transfiguration! Then we'll continue visiting major sites in Galilee for two days.

Then we'll visit a few sites on the way to Jerusalem. Once there, we plan to stay at Notre Dame guest house, just outside the wall of the Old City. While there we'll visit Bethlehem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, walk the Via Dolorosa, and visit selected other major sites, before returning to the U.S. on Feb 21.

All of this during the off season, in order to escape the crowds, and at a relaxed and contemplative pace, with time for prayer and reflection, time to let the reality of Jesus' life sink deep into our hearts, deep into our bones.

If this appeals to you, and you would like to learn more, please email Rev. Scott Dow, DMin., at [info@transformationtravel.net](mailto:info@transformationtravel.net).

We invite you to walk where Jesus walked, sit where Jesus sat, and pray where Jesus prayed!



## VOLUNTEERS

We also thank these wonderful volunteers who generously gave of their time and talents to help us: **Anne P. Kuebel** and **Claudette Michaud**, who came more than once to decorate and wrap fruitcakes — we'd never have shipped all those fruitcakes without their help! We thank **Bob Lamothe** for numerous little handyman projects that needed his skilled attention. We thank **Peggy Powis** for layout of our newsletter and **Al Parker** for printing. Thanks so very much to all of you; by freeing us up from some tasks, you help make it possible for us to spend more time in prayer for all those in need!

Photo from Sr. Elizabeth  
"Boat" chapel at Magdala  
in the Holy Land



## Book Review:

Some wonderful person passed this book on to me, I can't remember who. If I could, I would surely express my gratitude! I have 'read' it very, very slowly, over the course of months—even though it is a slim volume at best. This book *needs* to be read slowly and pondered; for each sentence is dense and rich with meaning and wisdom.

Ms. Taylor's brief *vita* on the back cover states that she comes from 'a technology rich background,' having worked on information systems for the White House and various Fortune 500 companies. She has been married, raised children, became Catholic, and eventually felt called to live in solitude. This book is a reflection on the life of solitude, as she lives it and as she experiences it.

The chapters are arranged according to the various promises she has made to live in solitude: silence, solitude, simplicity, solidarity, obedience, and prayer. Each is brief. Yet each is filled with wisdom, the fruit of her life and prayer. I will share some few quotes with you, as they can speak far more clearly, more wisely, than I.

"Silence, to me, is to do no violence to the thoughts coursing through [my mind]. ...I listen to them with God's heart. I hold them in the playground of my mind, giving them space and time to live out their stories.

*Silent Dwellers – Embracing the Solitary Life* by Barbara Erakko Taylor. Continuum, New York, NY:1999, 106 pp.

Sometimes I enjoy them. Other times I am horrified by them. ...I sit with them, or add a prayer to their serene or turbulent waters."

"One day I was quietly sitting in prayer once again lamenting my inability to *acquire* the simple lifestyle I felt essential to the solitary. I felt a demanding voice within me saying, *Stop. Just stop.* Stop trying. Stop creating. Stop evading. Simply *be*. Be human. Be vulnerable. Be a failure. *That* is simplicity."

"We have this strange sense that the holy solution for the next step on our journey is within our bodies, and accessible to us because God is completely incarnate in us. God calls us to wholeness, which *is* holiness. We are called to be completely human...the gift God has given us is the gift of human *life*."

"We are not angels, and most of us are not saints. We are human beings—and it is hard to be a human. Prayer is not meant to elevate us from our human condition; it is not meant to be set apart from our lives. Prayer is as ordinary as breathing. ...I breathe—into the horror and joy of being human—and find God."

*Sr Elizabeth*

## Bake Sales

Yes, we're already thinking ahead to our bake sale season! Here's what we have 'cooked up' so far:

### SAVE THE DATES

April 27/28

St. Francis of Assisi, Belfast

May 25/26

St. Bernard, Rockland

June 9

St Mary, Bangor

Hope to see you there! We have everything you need from entrees to cakes & cookies, breads & jams.

Come see us before or after Mass, and support your *local* contemplative life!



# BENEFACTORS

Nov 2018 – Jan 2019

Anonymous (5)  
Margaret & Roger Alexander  
John Allison  
Louise Allen  
    mem Priscilla Bazinet  
Glenn Angell  
Helen King Atallah  
Marian Barker  
    mem Anne & Leslie Springer  
Beverly Bartosiak  
Janet Bartosiak  
Ellen Bilodeau  
Nancy Boyd  
Julie Brawn  
    mem Stephen, Patrick & Carol  
Cecile Bouffard  
Toni Brann  
    mem Anne Springer  
Ruth Calderwood  
Larry Campbell  
Margaret Carpenter  
Rev. Roger Chabot  
Jody Chasse  
Gordon Cheeseman  
    mem Alice  
Rita Crowley  
Elise Dennis  
Claire Deptula  
    mem David & Stephen Deptula  
Ronald & Suzanne Dolan  
    honor Pat Shaw  
Myles & Nanette Doyle  
Julie Dupont  
Armand Favreau  
Peter & Rosemarie Felt  
Stephen Fischer  
Carolyn Frost  
Robert G. Fuller, Jr.  
Barbara Gawle  
Dan & KelLee Gray  
Lori Gregory  
    mem Francis Gregory  
Elizabeth Grimard  
Geri Guerette  
Elizabeth Harmon  
    mem Taylor Harmon & Ann  
Murdoch Reynolds  
Karen & Tom Hastings  
    honor Bob & Moira Fuller  
Susan Hyde

Nancy Iacono  
Peggy Johnston  
    mem Wilma Ackley  
Claire Kaiser  
    mem Robert Kaiser  
Sue Kenny  
William Kiely, Jr.  
Knights of Columbus  
    Canabis CCI #1299  
Knights of Columbus  
    Fr. Druillette Ccl Old Town  
Marjorie Knuuti  
    mem James Breen  
Elizabeth Kobe  
Rev. Jude Michael Krill, OFM  
    Conv  
    mem Michael A. Krill  
    & Fr. Tom Walsh  
Anne P. Kuebel  
Ron & Cynthia Kujak  
Janet Kuklinski  
Barbara Kurz  
Bob & Louise Lamothe  
    mem Theresa Ancil  
Janet Leaver  
Lucinda Long  
Ann & John MacKay  
    mem Patrick & Christopher  
Dick & Sharon Marchi  
Kathy Martin  
Mary & Jim McGrath  
    mem Alfred Marchi  
Mary Alice McLean  
    mem Carol Smith  
Claudette & Phil Michaud  
Catherine Moskosky  
Cynthia Murray-Beliveau  
Thomas & Sarah Neary  
    honor Pat Shaw  
Ann Marie Noble  
Austine M. O'Connor  
Timothy Packey  
Anthony Pagano  
Susan Palmer  
Drew & Emily Parker  
    mem Gail  
Pat & Ken Parker  
Virginia Peacock  
Madeleine Pomerleau  
Norman Pomerleau

Verna Rancourt  
    mem Gerald Rancourt  
Deacon Joe Reid  
Carol Rice  
Shannon Robbins  
Linda Roden  
    mem Tony Newell  
Jane Russo  
Mel & Tim Santos  
    honor Ron Grant  
Robert & Fran Scott  
    mem St. Joseph  
Lucinda Jane Seigel  
Susan Shaw  
Pat Shaw  
Margaret Simmons  
Beury & Ellee Simons  
Ardis Sitar  
Russell & Paulette Spera  
    mem Marisse Hope Spera  
Lois Sprague  
    mem Christopher Sprague  
Emma Stephenson-Smith  
    mem Donald F. Smith  
Ellen Szela  
Peg Thomas  
Patricia Turner  
Janet Van Fleet  
    mem Jeanette Davis  
Lou & Linda Wagner  
Mary Lee Wile  
Mike Will  
Diane Williams  
Imelda Yorkus

Our thanks and grateful prayers to each and every one of you, with very special thanks to those listed but once who have sent offerings many times. May God abundantly bless and reward you for your generosity. And please let us know if we've overlooked or misspelled your name!