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is a  
tax-exempt  
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Catholic institution  
within the  
Diocese of Portland,  
Maine.

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# The View

## NEWSLETTER



Vol. 25 No. 3  
September 2020

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

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# Staying the Course

What a year it has been so far! What a challenging year it continues to be—and likely will continue to be as we head towards fall and winter. I am reminded of St Paul's words: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race.... St Paul had the finish line in sight; we however are still in the midst of this fight and we don't know when it will end.

Back in late spring, we probably thought that we had this virus beaten. We all did our bit: we quarantined, we went into lockdown. Schools went online, many people's jobs went online. Essential workers heroically stepped up to the plate and kept us safe, fed, sheltered, and protected. Hospital and healthcare workers—especially in hot spots like New York—were the heroes of the moment, working tirelessly and fearlessly in hospitals and care centers and testing sites.

But we recklessly thought that it would be over by now. We assumed we could return to 'normal' – whatever that is, or was. Now we realize that we can't go back to normal. The new normal is that the virus is still very much present among us; an insidious, hidden enemy. How long will this last? We don't know. And that is very, very hard. It's incredibly hard for schools: for

teachers, for students, for parents—all of whom are unsure what to do. Can schools reopen safely? We don't know. Is distance learning even possible, or is it good enough? We don't know. Can people safely return to work? Only with many precautions. Is it safe to ride a bus, or a train, or a plane? We're not sure, and many of us don't want to take the chance.

And so we trudge along in this perilous 'new normal.' We endure. But it's hard. It's very hard.

We need to find ways to help ourselves stay the course, to endure. We need to find ways to be hopeful, new ways to find comfort and solace, new ways to take care of ourselves. Many of the old ways: going out to eat, going to the movies, traveling, attending church—most of these are different now, and they come with risks attached: the risk of catching the virus.

So how can we mitigate the hardships of this time of pandemic? Recently I was wondering how to handle this time, and spoke about it with a friend. "I just don't know what to do!" I said. The response: "Just keep showing up."

"Keep showing up?" I thought. "What's that supposed to

mean?" Then as I reflected on it, I began to see the wisdom of my friend's response. I thought of the Lord's fidelity to the ancient Hebrews in the Old Testament. There is a special name for that fidelity; it's called *hesed*. It means 'steadfast love.' Steadfast love: that's what we need to practice right now. And how do we do this? By looking at God's steadfast love for us and for all people throughout the ages.. Throughout the Old Testament, God's love never failed, no matter what happened, and no matter how often God's people turned away. Yet God never abandoned them. God stayed the course. God kept showing up, And God will continue to show up for us, in myriads of little ways.

The desert tradition has a name for how to live with difficult situations. It suggests an attitude of *acceptance*. That means that we accept the situation as it is. Not passively, not negatively, not whining and complaining, or dwelling on the inevitable negative thoughts. Rather, we just accept that this is how it is, and choose to make the best of it, enduring our inner complaints and angry thoughts, relying on the God who is ever present to help us.

So perhaps all we need to do is just accept what is, and keep

showing up, keep staying the course. Keep up our spirits and those of others. Wear a mask, stay socially distant—but stay deeply connected in the spirit, in faith, in reaching out to others in whatever ways this pandemic allows. Help those in need. Remain calm in this time of fear: fear of the virus, fear of illness, fear of loss of income, fear of all sorts of things.

Sr Scholastica's drawing on p. 5 gives us a lovely sense of how precious we are to God, and how God holds us with faithful love, even from our earliest days. We are all held most tenderly in the gently loving hands of God. Even in our darkest times—*especially* in our darkest times—God is very close to us. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus is a living witness to this. When we're anxious or fearful, our anxiety and fears can get in the way, leaving us unable to experience God's peaceful presence. We need to bring our faith to our aid, to remind us that even in the midst of a pandemic, with death and despair all around us, God's steadfast love is still with us, upholding us, empowering us to stay the course, until we all come through this together, as we most certainly will.

*Sr Elizabeth*



# ***The Year of*** **NO** **BAKE** **SALES**

**Online & Phone Orders ONLY**

Once upon a time, many months ago, we thought we'd be holding bake sales again by later this fall. Alas, it is not to be! And so we are here to remind you that you can purchase those scrumptious

**Traditional English  
Fruitcakes  
Rum Cakes  
Cookies  
Jams  
Hot Sauce  
and  
Herbes des Landes**

Just go to [transfigurationhermitage.org](https://transfigurationhermitage.org) and click on the shop. We are happy to ship direct to your door via USPS Priority Mail. If you live locally, please just call ahead to pick up items in our gift shop; please give one day advance notice for fruitcakes, so we can decorate and gift box! We also occasionally have frozen entrees available, for those who live locally. Call us at

**(207)445-8031**

or

go to the online shop at

<https://transfigurationhermitage.org/products/>

Help support our life of solitude and prayer, and enjoy some wonderful goodies as well!



# BOOK REVIEW

*Seeing Flowers: Discover the Hidden Life of Flowers*  
photography by Robert Llewellyn,  
written by Teri Dunn Chace.  
Timber Press, Portland, OR;  
2013.302 pp.

*'What is a book of flowers doing in a spiritual newsletter?'* you ask. It may be an unusual choice, but as I looked through the book, I noticed I was so drawn to the gorgeous photographs, that I couldn't help but linger over many of them, placing my hands palm down on them, absorbing their beauty through my palms, my fingers, my fingertips...and realized that it was a form of prayer, a reaching out to absorb the divine beauty, the beauty of God, experienced through God's marvelous, beautiful, *gorgeous* creation. That's why I strongly recommend this book, especially to those who are drawn by beauty: the beauty of God in creation, in nature, in flowers.

The photos are amazing: tendrils of vining flowers curl across the page, swords of upright leaves, green veined, translucent, capture my eyes and imagination. And the close-ups! Georgia O'Keefe-esque peonies, tulips, petunias are breathtakingly sumptuous. Looking deep into the throaty heart of crocus, or the cheekiness of violas, or other entrancing delights, I was truly...entranced!

The book is divided into flower 'families' and the opening page of each family offers not only a photo but a quote, as for example this one from the Spiderwort family: "Flower petals falling/seem to understand my dreams and aspirations./They touch the ground/in perfect silence."

And the text! Lyrical, descriptive, and it always opens up the world of the flower to the reader. "As varied, weird, wonderful, sexy, and graceful as flowers are, ultimately they have always been the plant world's supremely resourceful way of staying alive. ...Pollination is the ambitious goal of all flowers."

The downside of this delightful book is the cost: \$29.95 when purchased new. We were fortunate to find a used copy in perfect condition on the Thrift Books website, listed for \$2.99—and with free shipping! I highly recommend both Thrift Books and ABE Books websites, for wonderful bargains.

*St Elizabeth*



FLOWER IMAGES FROM  
The Sr. Scholastica Collection

## RETREATS NOW AVAILABLE

We have reopened St. Moira's retreat house, but during the pandemic, we only allow one person at a time (two or more if from the same household).

We also ensure there is no virus present by leaving the building vacant for a few days between guests.

Our retreat house gets booked early this year, as so many other retreat houses are closed, so be sure to call or email early to find an available date.

It is still a wonderful bargain at a nominal offering of \$50/day/person. This includes all meals—meaning Sr Bernadette's wonderful home cooking—use of the chapel and grounds, and a gracious, welcoming space, giving you ample opportunity for prayer, solitude, silence, or just relaxing!

**Please call  
207.445.8031**

**or  
e-mail**

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

A one night advance deposit is required.

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

## IN KIND DONATIONS & VOLUNTEERS

We are so grateful  
to  
**Rachel Adams**  
And  
**Gunner Wood**  
for the gift of stamps,  
to  
**Ruth Gagnon**  
for her beautiful handmade kitchen  
cloths,  
to  
**Tom Goyne**  
for a new Epson LCD projector,  
for  
a beautiful oil painting by  
**Margaret Carpenter**,  
for  
lovely fresh eggs from **Sue Kenny**,  
for help in digging plants from  
**Marcel & Kathryn**,  
for our layout design from  
**Peggy Powis**.  
And  
for constant generosity  
from our printers,  
**Quality Copy of Augusta**.  
Thank you all so very much, all the  
more so in these very hard times!



# HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE POSTPONED

Unfortunately, the pandemic shows no signs of relenting as we send our newsletter to print, so we have reluctantly postponed our February 2021 pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

However, we are hopeful that there will be a vaccine by next spring, and so are tentatively rescheduling for late winter/early spring of 2022.

Stay tuned for details!

## WISH LIST

**We have a very special wish right now, for it is time for our dear Sr. Scholastica to renew her visa.**

This is an arduous process, particularly in the current political climate, and we need the services of Catholic Legal Immigration.

The cost for the approval of religious worker status, including the immigration attorney, comes to about \$4500! And that doesn't include the cost of her trip to and from Indonesia, where she *must* go to the US consulate in Jakarta for the actual visa renewal.

So any help towards this expense, however small or great, will be so appreciated.



**“Long before any human being saw us, we are seen by God’s loving eyes.”  
Henri Nouwen**

Meditation Artwork by Sr. Scholastica

# BENEFACTORS

## MAY – JULY

Anonymous (2)  
Louise Allen  
    mem Avon Libby & Priscilla  
    Laganiere  
Glenn Angell  
Glenn Angell  
    mem Bob Antognoni  
Helen King Atallah  
Marilyn Baer  
Beverly Bartosiak  
    mem Bartosiak family  
Rev. Bette Bond  
Ruth Calderwood  
    mem Mary Cahill Hansen  
Mary Denise Carleton  
Margaret Carpenter  
Josephine Chasse  
Linda Cocotas  
    mem Lynne Miller  
Ruth Covell  
Robert & Phyllis Curtis  
    mem Gail Parker  
Helena Cyr  
    mem George & Lisa  
Jim Dailey  
    mem Jeanne Shanehan  
Peggy Delano  
Claire Deptula  
    mem Stephen & David Deptula  
Myrtie Dickey  
    mem David Woo  
Steve & Marti Dome  
E. Scott & Sharon Dow  
Sr. Bette Edl  
    mem Patricia Koehler  
Peter & Rosemarie Felt  
Mary Fitts  
Joanne Furnarotto  
    mem our parents  
Ruth Ann Gagnon  
    mem Raymond Ouellette  
    & James Gagnon  
Barbara Gawle  
Angela Gilladoga, MD  
Marie & Dorothy Gondek  
Thomas Goyne  
Dan & KelLee Gray  
Lori Gregory  
    mem Francis Gregory  
Elizabeth Harmon  
    mem Leo Gould  
Robert & Rachel Henry

Annie Hill  
    mem Connie Gabrielli Levie  
Carol Hommick  
    mem Doris Brock  
Catherine Hopkins  
    mem Chet Hopkins  
Nancy Iacono  
Peggy Johnston  
Peggy Johnston  
    mem Julia Brassel  
Claire Kaiser  
    mem Robert Kaiser  
Sue Kenny  
Knights of Columbus  
    William Brannigan Council  
    #3942  
Knights of Columbus  
    Lime Rock Council #136  
Marjorie Knuuti  
Elizabeth Kobe  
Katie Koles  
Jude Michael Krill, OFM Conv  
    mem Michael A Krill  
    & Fr Tom Walsh, OFM Conv  
Ron & Cynthia Kujak  
Janet & Ted Kuklinski  
Barbara Kurz  
Pearley Lachance  
Bob & Louise Lamothe  
    mem Theresa Ancil  
Janet Leaver  
Lucinda Long  
Ruth Longenecker  
Dick & Sharon Marchi  
Elizabeth Massey  
Mary & Jim McGrath  
Sandra Mercier  
Claudette & Phil Michaud  
Connie Morin  
Rev. Frank Morin  
Catherine Moskosky  
Joan W. Mullaney  
Austine M O'Connor  
    mem Thomas A. Garza  
Jewel & Tim O'Donnell  
Walter Osterman  
Brent Otto, SJ  
Ken & Pat Parker  
Donna Ptak  
    mem Roger Ptak  
Annalisa Randall  
    mem my mother Elizabeth Kane

Louise Reed  
    mem Ralph & Helen Caswell  
Carol Rice Dempsey  
Shannon Robbins  
Patrick & Judith Roche  
    mem Dan & Jean MacNally  
Linda Roden  
    mem Tony, Dan, Nana  
Donna Rogers  
Dan & Connie Roy  
Jane Russo  
Fran & Robert Scott  
    honor St. Joseph  
Pat Shaw  
Ardis Sitar  
Raymond & Dianne Smith  
Martin Spahn  
Barbara Snowadzky  
Paulette & Russell Spera  
    mem Esther Spera  
    & Grace Lapierre Sylvestre  
Msgr Paul F. Stefanko  
Emma Stephenson  
    mem Donald Smith  
Pande & Rita Stevens  
Bob & Linda Stutzman  
Ann Thurber  
Patricia Turner  
Caroline Wallace  
    mem Christine Mongillo Adams  
Caroline Wallace  
Lenore Wang  
E. Joanne Whitehead  
Gabrielle Wicklow  
Michael Will  
Bill Williams  
Judy Young

Our thanks to each and every one of you who have been so generous, and we note that many people have given more than once. We are overwhelmingly grateful to the many people who have reached out to us during this pandemic, and supported us so generously now that we cannot have bake sales. Thank you again and again! Know that you are all in our daily prayers. And please let us know if we've forgotten you or if we have misspelled your name!