
TRANSFIGURATION
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The View

NEWSLETTER



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FEAR AND FATIGUE

What a time we have all been having! What a challenging, difficult, demanding year! As if the pandemic were not enough, we've suffered through some of the worst fires in history in the West, and pummeling, unrelenting hurricanes in the South and East. We've seen horrible acts of racial injustice, and our cities and streets have been filled with protesters—most of them peaceful, but a few, unfortunately, not. To cap it all off, our country has suffered through a divisive, polarizing political season and election, revealing huge discord and dissension throughout the nation. As I write this reflection in mid-November, the polarization continues, and the pandemic is raging out of control, with cases skyrocketing, hospitals nearly overwhelmed, and deaths rising.

What an incredible year! Surely 2020 will be a defining time for those of us who live through it. Much as the assassination of JFK was a defining moment, much as 9/11 was a defining moment, so also this ill-fated year of 2020 will be a defining time in all of our lives.

When the pandemic first

arrived, I thought we would be finished with it soon, by summer at the latest. Perhaps others did also. But now we find that we are still in the midst of it, in fact, it seems worse than ever. And we are all tired—pandemic fatigue has set in. Twinned with our fatigue, we also have fear. Cases here in Maine remained quite low during the first wave of Covid, and were even lower during the summer. But now? Cases are heading for the skies, even here in central Maine, and I find myself becoming a bit fearful every time I enter the supermarket, or get gas, or do any other errand.

With so much pain, destruction, and death all around us, what can we do to help ourselves survive, not only physically but emotionally and spiritually? Perhaps first we need to think about what we are actually feeling, so that we can find the appropriate remedy.

First, of course, we're tired of all this. Tired of the pandemic, tired of wearing masks, of staying distant, tired of worrying every time we—or one of our loved ones—needs to go anywhere or do anything that might put us into

contact with this hidden, invisible enemy. And we're tired of the huge polarization that infests our country, of the anger and enmity that perhaps infects even those we love, perhaps even infects ourselves.

We may also be very fearful: of the virus, of losing our job or our home or our business. Fearful of those in public authority, that they do not enough to try to curb the virus, or perhaps fearful that they might do too much. Fearful of the protests and counter protests that have rocked the nation. Fearful of violence in our cities, on our streets. Perhaps fearful of the polarization that seems to be tearing our country apart, fearful that the U.S. is falling into chaos.

With all of this fatigue, and all of these fears, we may fall prey to a deep sense of helplessness. All of this is beyond our control, seemingly beyond anyone's control. And it may evoke frustration, and anger. We want things to get better, and they only seem to be getting worse.

I have often felt this fatigue, and certainly I have felt these fears, and the sense of

helplessness. After election day, waiting for the results, I felt anxiety and apprehension bubbling up within, and was helpless to stop it. Finally I realized I needed to do something, to have some degree of control over some small aspect of my life. What did I do? I cleaned the office, from top to bottom: dusted, polished, vacuumed, organized. It felt great! My anxiety didn't vanish, but it became manageable.

Asserting some small degree of control is perhaps the obvious solution when everything seems out of control. But there are other things we can do. As I've written in this column on other occasions, first we simply need to *notice* how we feel. Just noticing our emotions while we are feeling them gives us a bit of separation from them, and therefore an accompanying sense of control over them. Once we notice, we then have choices: we can let ourselves be swept up in our emotions, or we can distract ourselves from them. Or we can comfort ourselves in them, by speaking to that emotion, whether fear, or fatigue, or helplessness, or whatever—as though it was a little child, and comforting it. 'Yes, I know you're feeling helpless, but I'm here, I'm the adult, and I'm here to help you.' Or something similar. Because as adults, we are not always fearful, or tired, or helpless, and we can call on our adult self to remind this hurting emotion that we are here to help.

Best of all, I suggest, is to take this emotion, with our adult self, before the presence of the Lord, in whatever way we know God best: as Jesus, as Lord, as Father, as Mother, as Spirit. In whatever way we are most comfortable. Just allow ourselves to be with that divine person, and allow ourselves to listen deeply, to feel deeply whatever is being offered to us. It might be strength

to carry on. It might be consolation. It might be simply *presence*. In this time of distancing, this time of imposed isolation, perhaps simple *presence* is the best gift we can receive, the gift we most long for.

The message of Christmas, of Emmanuel, is that God is always *with us*, always present to us. The message of the infant born for us is that our weakness, our helplessness, our fears, our fatigue is of infinite value in God's loving and compassionate gaze. God did not come to us in power and might. God came to us in the form of a helpless infant. An infant who lived and came of age and did his best to be with us and lead us, and was ultimately rejected, and preferred to die with and for us, that we might know that all our weaknesses, vulnerabilities, fears, and helplessness are of infinite value to God. That Jesus who embraced weakness, fear, fatigue, helplessness is surely with us when we feel the same.

Blessed Advent and Christmas, and may you always be aware of that silent, loving, strengthening presence of God.

St. Elizabeth

FRUITCAKES!

Yes, It's that time of year again! In fact, we've already had numerous calls and requests for our famous **Traditional English Fruitcakes.**



This year the price is \$25 for a 2-lb cake, (plus tax & shipping, if needed). Our cakes are moist and rich, liberally soaked in brandy and aged for six months or more. **Last year we sold out about 10 days before Christmas**, so order NOW!! And don't forget to order cookies, hot sauce, jams, and our famous Herbes des Landes as well. Plus the newest addition, already a big favorite: Rum Cakes!! They are baked in bundt pans, and then fully soaked with a rum-butter mix. A favorite with all, especially those who find fruitcakes too intensely flavored.

To order, call us at **207.445.8031** (business hours only, please!) or order online.



2 lb.
\$25



*"This is the best
fruitcake
I've ever had!"*

Prayerfully handcrafted by
contemplative sisters.
Aged with brandy and
loaded with fruits and nuts,
creating a moist, rich and
delicious dessert.
Decorated and gift boxed.

Traditional English Fruitcake

Other delicacies:

Cookies \$7 / dz

Lemon, Chocolate Chip
Hazelnut Shortbread,
Decorated Sugar, Pecan Ball,
Coconut Macaroon

Rum Cakes

Small \$15
Large \$20

Christmas Stollen

\$8 / loaf

Herbes des Landes

\$7 / 4oz jar

Jams \$7 / 8oz jar

Wild Blueberry, Strawberry
Red Raspberry, Blackberry
Peach Preserves, Very Berry

Super Hot Sauce

\$8 / 8oz jar



**** All prices ****
plus shipping & tax



Rum Cakes



Stollen



Sr. Elizabeth Sr. Bernadette Sr. Scholastica



TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE



205 Windsor Neck Road
Windsor, ME 04363

To order: By phone (207) 445-8031
Hermitage gift shop open daily 10-5
www.TransfigurationHermitage.org/products

RETREATS STILL AVAILABLE

Despite the pandemic, St. Moira's retreat house is open, for one person only at a time, and we are leaving it empty for a space of days between people.

We have heard from those who come that they find it so restorative to have a time away, in quiet, alongside a praying community. Our normal offering is still \$50/day/person, and that includes all of our delicious, home-cooked meals. Plus access to our chapel, and grounds, with 68 acres of fields, woods, and a stream. Our outdoor Stations of the Cross trail begins and ends at the retreat house, and the half-mile Prayer Trail is kept mowed and smooth.

Treat yourself to a time of peace and prayer, a time to rest and restore priorities and energies. To reserve a time,

please call
207.445.8031

or
e-mail

retreats@transfigurationhermitage.org

A one night advance deposit is required.

Image Credits - Winter 2020
Sister Elizabeth
Sister Scholastica
Rick & Peggy Powis

CLIP AND SAVE

COOKING! With SR. BERNADETTE

End of the Garden Winter Squash Soup

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. sweet Italian sausage, optional
Don't use if vegetarian
3 medium winter squash, peeled & chopped
2 potatoes, peeled & chopped
2 green peppers, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2 red bell peppers, chopped
1 cucumber, peeled & chopped
(Yes, cucumber)
1 onion chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
Parsley and/or cilantro, chopped
¼ piece of fresh ginger, minced
(size varies to taste)
3 T. Herbes des Landes (concoction available
for purchase at the Hermitage)
2 t. curry powder (more or less to taste)
Salt to taste
Chicken or veggie broth

INSTRUCTIONS

If using sausage, saute in 2T of veg oil until lightly golden brown. Set aside.

In at stock pot that will hold at least 6 quarts, heat 3 T. oil over medium heat. Add chopped onion, garlic, and ginger and saute well. Add spices and stir. Add all veggies and parsley/cilantro, 3-4 cups of broth, and 1 – 2 cups of water, and bring to boil. Add in the sausage (if using) and let simmer until veggies are cooked through. Let it cool and put into a mixer and puree it well. Store in small containers, cool completely, then freeze to have soup on hand whenever you want! Defrost, heat and serve. Soup may be thinned with additional broth or with light cream.

Yields 5 plus quarts

This makes a tasty and easy treat on a cold winter day!

Sr. Bernadette

CLIP AND SAVE

END OF THE GARDEN WINTER SQUASH



MISE EN PLACE FOR SR. B'S SOUP



Herbes des Landes – see page 3 to order

TASTE AND SEE

REMEMBERING IRENE



Our dearly loved friend **Irene Siket** died suddenly after a brief illness on April 9, 2020, at age 87. Irene was a deeply faith-filled woman, generous and giving to all, of her time, her abundant energy, and her possessions. Her husband Michael had predeceased her in 2000, and she leaves behind her two 'boys', Arthur Siket of Corona, CA and Rev. Bruce Siket, pastor of Christ the Divine Mercy parish in Millinocket. Due to COVID, we were not able to be present at her funeral, which we greatly regret.

I can't remember when we first met Irene, but as we came to know her, we learned what a great woman of faith she was. And it wasn't just a 'pie in the sky' faith, but a faith that informed her daily life in great measure. She was a lifelong parishioner at St. Sebastian church, she volunteered nearly up to her death at the St. Sebastian thrift shop, she raised her boys in her faith, helped her neighbors, worked hard all her life, and up until a couple of years before her death, snow-blown her drive and walk, and raked the snow off her roof!

Her son Fr. Bruce visited us in October and brought with him a generous bequest in memory of Michael and Irene Siket. Her

generosity is providing us with the funds to apply for Sr. Scholastica's permanent residency (green card). Today this entails a lengthy process, and includes significant fees to the Dept of Homeland Security, as well as the even greater fees to the immigration attorney.

Thank you Irene, and may you rest in peace with the Lord! Your generosity is enabling our Sr. Scholastica to continue here, God willing, and if she so discerns, for the rest of her life!

THANK YOU BENEFACTORS!

Good news! My visa has been approved and I will be legally allowed to stay for another 2.5 years here. For all of you who have been contributing to my visa extension through donations, support, prayers and many other means, my utmost gratitude for you all. Your generosity is truly a blessing for myself, Sr. Elizabeth and Sr. Bernadette. The visa extension is a way to answer to God's calling, not just my calling but also your callings.

You have answered and said yes to God's calling. Jesus once said, "Love one another as I have loved you." It is God's calling for us to love one another, no matter how big or small. Each of us takes our part to love. That's God's calling for each of us, that is to fill the world with love as God has loved us and the world. I pray fervently each day that God will continually be at work throughout your life; that as we all embark our journey through different paths of life, we are united as one in God's compassionate embrace.

Sr. Scholastica

**TRANSFIGURATION
HERMITAGE**
needs your generosity and
support
for continued growth.
Please use the enclosed
envelope
or visit our online shop
at

www.transfigurationhermitage.org



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

BENEFACTORS

AUGUST – OCTOBER

Anonymous, (4)
Claire Andrews
Teresa Altman
Marian Barker
 mem Ann Springer
Beverly Bartosiak
Rev. Mr. Rodney Berger
Eleanor Bilodeau
 mem Gerard
Martha Block
Rev. Bette Bond
 mem Charles Storrs
Cam & Joan Borton
Edward & Carol Boudreau
 mem Marguerite Anne Boudreau
Shirley Brittell
Elizabeth Burns & Kevin Rung
Ruth Calderwood
Philip & Mary Carthage
 mem Mary Cuffe Linden
Josephine Chasse
Gary & Ellen Crocker
 mem Francis & Lorna Crocker
 & Ron Gamage
Rita Crowley
Robert & Phyllis Curtis
 mem Irene Parent
Claire Deptula
Suzanne Dolan
 mem Dad
Donna Dufour
 mem Brooks Joseph Dufour
Julie Dupont
Estate of Jeffrey Scott Bridges
 Mary E. Bridges, per rep
Armand Favreau
Peter & Rosemarie Felt
Robert G. Fuller, Jr.
Nicholas & Joanne Furnaratto,
 mem our parents
Barbara Gawle
Angela Gilladoga, MD
Ramonda Grzymala
 mem Dolores Sweeney
Elizabeth Harmon
 mem Ed Mooney
Robert & Rachel Henry
Anne Hill
Carol Hommick
Leo Hurchivees
Nancy Iacono
Peggy Johnston

Jason & Barbara Kafka
 mem Beatrice Ockerman
Elizabeth Kobe
Rev. Jude Michael Krill, OFM
Conv
 mem Michael A. Krill &
 Fr. Tom Walsh, OFM Conv
Ron & Cindy Kujak
Barbara Kurz
Pat Lepak
Lucinda Long
Joe & Bonnie Loubier
Dick & Sharon Marchi
Mary Alice McLean
Phil & Claudette Michaud
Joseph Morelli
Rev. Frank Morin
Joan W. Mullaney
Rev. Frank Murray
Cynthia Murray-Belliveau
Austine M. O'Connor
Walter Osterman
Timothy E Packey
Al Parker
Erik & Ellen Parker
Ken & Pat Parker
Norman Pomerleau
Carol Rice Dempsey
Carol Rice Dempsey
 mem Marie Sabin
Nancy Rines
Donna Rogers
 mem Nicole Gomez
Jane Russo
Robert & Fran Scott
 honor St. Joseph
Pat Shaw
Ardis Sitar
Lois Sprague
Bernadette Steele
 mem Noah & Earl Steele
Pande & Rita Stevens
Suzanne Stohlman
Bob & Linda Stutzman
Jennie Swenson
 mem Richard Swenson family
Ellen & Mike Szela
 mem Martha Hritz "Ritz"
Caroline Wallace
Lenore Wang
Mariellen Whelan
E. Joanne Whitehead

Gabrielle Wicklow
 mem Helen Maffei
Mike Will
Rebecca Woo
Sharon Woo
 mem Grace Frawley
Therese Young
 mem Gail Parker

Thanks to each and every one of you who have contributed so generously! No matter how small or large the gift, we know each one of you gives from the heart, and that is all that matters to the Lord – and to us! Thanks to those of you who are listed but once, but who have given many times. If we've forgotten you, or misspelled your name, please let us know!

IN KIND DONATIONS

Our thanks also to those of you who have contributed in so many ways: to **Bob Lamothe** for handyman help; to **Al Parker**, for checking out and delivering a used tiller and also for picking up a gorgeous but used desk for our Sr. Scholastica; to **Gunner Wood & Debbie Ludwig**, for picking up another inexpensive secondhand desk to use in our fruitcake packing room. We are grateful also especially for **Dianne Schelble**, for weekly art lessons for our artist-in-residence Sr Scholastica; to **Gunner Wood** for stamps, to **Sue Kenny** for gorgeous mums for our gardens; and to **Ida & Ann & Patty** for bringing lots of groceries! And always, last but not least, to **Peggy Powis** for laying out this newsletter, and for love and encouragement all along the way.

To all of you, and to those we've forgotten, our thanks and grateful daily prayers.