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# The View

## NEWSLETTER

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

# Relaxing

When we think about trying to follow the Gospel directives, or in old-fashioned terms, the practice of virtue, we normally associate this with a lot of effort. Think of Lent, for instance: we decide we'll 'give something up,' maybe chocolate or candy or something that we normally enjoy. It's hard to do! It takes effort, and thought, and will power.

I have recently come to think that perhaps we have it wrong. Yes, there are still times when we need to make an effort. But overall, perhaps, making an effort, even a strenuous effort, doesn't usually have much impact. Sure, we can give up chocolate—or something else—for Lent, though even that brief period can be challenging. But a real change? Try giving up anger, or envy, or laziness. For a *lifetime*? Now that's a challenge!

Perhaps, over the course of years, we see some minimal improvement. Perhaps. But perhaps not.

Suppose that what is needed is not more will power, or muscle power, or major inner strategies? Suppose we might need to relax. Relax? Whew,

that sounds counterproductive, dangerous, maybe verging on heretical!

And yet...how far has will power taken us? How well do inner strategies, or incessant inner prayers, or practicing patience—how well do any of these work? For myself, I can say not a whole lot.

That being the case, what can it hurt to relax? Now I'm not advocating total laxity here. We don't want to be supine or flaccid. But an inner sense of relaxation allows us to respond to people and to situations with greater equanimity, and hence with more appropriate behavior. Instead of tensing ourselves to meet any and all challenges—which usually finds us over-reacting—we can calmly respond to the person, or situation, or our own inner emotion by making a conscious choice, based on what our faith calls us to do.

This kind of relaxation implies two conditions: one is the active practice of trusting God in all things. The second is the active practice of noticing our own inner needs and

emotions, and taking steps to ensure we do what is in our power to meet these legitimate needs. And also taking steps to take care of our own physical and emotional needs, whenever possible.

What do I mean by this? Here's an example: These last two weeks I've been overwhelmed with gardening. This is the time when everything needs to be done, and quickly. Last year I never had time for the raspberry patch, so it was overgrown with weeds, and there was little new growth. Early in the season I'd briefly thought of perhaps letting it go, pulling out the few remaining bushes, and seeding it back to lawn. But I didn't pay attention, and so took days of labor clearing the weeds, fertilizing and mulching. Now I regret it, as I am feeling anxious about all else that needs to be done. And anxiety makes me prone to overreact to any little incidents that happen. I didn't pay attention! And I didn't think about how much work it would take to restore the raspberries. And so I got overwhelmed. And so I

overreact when I'm stressed. Not only did I not pay attention to my insight about the raspberries, I didn't pay attention to my own need to not over work myself! And I didn't trust that God can provide the funds to buy all the raspberries we might ever need for our jams and pies! Not paying attention, and not trusting God, led to not relaxing in other situations, and then to overreacting.

As I write this, in the days leading up to Pentecost, I am reminded of how large a part the Holy Spirit plays in our lives. That is, if we let him! I remind myself to try to pay attention more and more to those quiet inner movements of the Spirit, which always guide me into what is most important and most needed, in my life, and in the life of the world. May we all be guided by God's most holy Spirit, the very Spirit of Jesus, who is always gently at work in our lives to bring us to the peace that only He can give.

*Sr. Elizabeth*

### WISH LIST

Our newly professed Sr. Anastasia will be going to school this summer via Zoom. She is signed up for two graduate courses at the School of Theology at St. John's University, the Benedictine school at Collegeville, run by the monks of St. John's Abbey. She'll be taking an exciting course on *Christian Prayer*, and also, since she is so musically gifted, a course in Gregorian chant. It will be very enriching for her monastic life here, and by extension, enriching for us. But education does not come cheap these days; these two courses cost \$2,000. And that's actually less expensive than most graduate courses, in part because they are offered in the summer, and via Zoom.

So we've realized we need to start an education fund, for Sr. Anastasia, and for those who, God willing, will be coming after her. If anyone feels moved to help with this, please just be sure to let us know that it's for the education fund. And thank you!!

### The Pentecost Spirit!

At Mass on Pentecost, Fr. John, our pastor, informed us about the relaxation of many pandemic restrictions, including the mask mandate. He emphasized that those who prefer to wear the mask, for any reason, should feel free to do so. And he also emphasized that we should not judge others: not those who wear masks, if we do not; not those who don't wear masks, if we do. He spoke at length, quite beautifully about the diversity of gifts that the Spirit gives, and how this diversity should be cause for rejoicing, not judging. And so Sr. Anastasia has painted a lovely bouquet of flowers of many kinds, a wonderful example of the diversity which God bestows on us so lavishly in springtime. May we all rejoice in the rich and generous diversity of lives in this country and around the world, and rejoice also in the gifts the Spirit constantly lavishes on each one of us!



Raspberries and Garden from 2016

*Special thanks to Dianne Schelble, a marvelous artist and a dear friend, who comes every week to paint together with Sr. Anastasia and in the process, guide and encourage her in her painting!*



# BENEFACTORS

February – April 2021

Anonymous (4)  
Louise Allen  
Glenn Angell  
Mary & Robert Arell  
Helen King Atallah  
    mem Armand Levasseur  
Marilyn Baer  
    mem Michael Manley  
Marilyn Baer  
    mem Christina Reynolds  
Marian Barker  
    mem Leslie & Anne Springer  
Beverly Bartosiak  
    mem Bartosiak family  
Eleanor Bilodeau  
Rev Bette Bond  
Richard & Mary Brodesky  
Ruth Calderwood  
Mary Denise Carlton  
Arline & Richard Caron  
Philip & Mary Carthage  
    mem Henry Harper Linden  
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Rita Crowley  
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    mem Gail Parker  
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Scott & Sharon Dow  
Donna Dufour  
Julie Dupont  
Armand Favreau  
Peter & Rosemarie Felt  
Robert G. Fuller, Jr.  
Nick & Joanne Furaratto  
    mem our parents  
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Barbara Gawle  
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Dorothy & Marie Gondek  
Thomas Goyne  
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    Fr Tom Walsh, OFM Conv  
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    mem Naomi McIvor  
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    mem Mary Ellen Cimillo  
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Jim McGrath  
Mary Alice McLean  
Connie Morin  
Rev. Frank Morin  
Joe Morelli  
Patricia Mulrain  
    honor Barbara Gawle  
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    mem Dr. William Burke  
Timothy E. Packey  
Al Parker  
Erik & Ellen Parker  
Ken & Pat Parker

Shawn Parker  
Norman Pomerleau  
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    mem Anna Newcombe  
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Carol Rice Dempsey  
Rev Ray & Kay Richard  
Shannon Robbins  
Linda Roden  
    mem Tony Newell  
Joanne Ryan  
Mr & Mrs Robert Scott  
    honor St Joseph  
Michael J. Seavey  
Pat Shaw  
    for Sr A's green card!  
Pat Shaw  
Marc & Sarah Sirois  
    mem Therese Sirois  
    & Normand Lajoie  
Ardis Sitar  
Martin Spahn  
    mem Philip Spahn  
Pande & Rita Stevens  
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    mem Donald F. Smith  
Rose & Richard Studholme  
Patricia Turner  
Donald Vereault II  
    mem Moe & Sco, Jack & Sam  
Leigh Welch  
Mariellen Whelan  
Gabrielle Wicklow  
Mike Will  
    mem Ruth K. Will  
N. Lawrence & Lorna Willey

Please let us know if we've forgotten your name—or if we misspelled it! And thank you, one and all, for your generous support. Throughout this time of pandemic, when we have been unable to hold bake sales, your support has kept us going!

## IN KIND DONATIONS, VOLUNTEERS

A great big thank you to all those who have so graciously come to our aid, especially handyman **Bob Lamothe**, and to **Peggy Powis**, who always does such a superb job of layout for this newsletter. Thanks also to those lovely women from Waterville, whose names we never heard, (could it be Ida & friend?), who brought us lots of groceries! Thanks to friends **Gunner & Deb**, for stamps, and eggs, and yummy lamb, and lots more! We are so grateful for all of our generous benefactors, great and small, and we hold you all in prayer each and every day! May the Lord bless and reward you abundantly!

## RETREATS

Yes, our lovely little retreat house, St. Moira's, is open! And we've had a steady stream of people coming for a time to relax, unwind, and deepen their walk with God. St. Moira's has four lovely single bed rooms, a reading room, and a full kitchen—stocked with coffee, teas, snacks, and everything you need for breakfast. We bring the other meals to you, all homecooked, and with our own veggies in season.

All this for \$50/person/night! Plus daytime access to the chapel, and 68 acres of field, woods and stream, accessible through our well groomed prayer trail and outdoor Stations of the Cross trail.

Out of an abundance of caution due to Covid, we are still accepting only one person at a time, two or more if from the same family or group. We invite you to come, to relax, and spend a few days resting with the Lord.

To register, or FMI call  
207.445.8031  
or email  
[th.retreats@gmail.com](mailto:th.retreats@gmail.com),



-----CLIP AND SAVE-----

## FROM Sr.B'S KITCHEN



### Strawberry Cloud\*

*Sr. B's "Take" on Panna Cotta - Serves 8*

**INGREDIENTS** 1 Box Strawberries cut into small pieces  
Unflavored Gelatin - 1 1/2T  
14 oz can Condensed milk

**PROCESS** 1. Cook the strawberries until slightly soft and let cool.  
Add sugar if necessary.  
2. Combine 1/2 C water and the gelatin. Set aside.  
3. Combine condensed milk and 1 C water. Mix well and heat.  
Do not let it boil.  
4. Take 1/3 C of this mixture and add it to the gelatin, mixing well until combined. Pour the gelatin mix into the milk mixture, a little at a time. Lower the heat, stirring constantly until it begins to thicken: about half an hour in the Indiana "test" kitchen.  
5. Remove from heat, cool a bit, then stir in cooled strawberries.  
6. Pour into a mold or baking dish and chill overnight.

**\*ALSO DELICIOUS WITH A PINT OF OTHER FRESH FRUIT!**  
Serve with Whipped Cream

-----CLIP AND SAVE-----

## FOCUS ON FORMATION

Why is the Gospel called Good News? The answer that I learned when I was growing up was ‘because of God’s salvation.’ But do I really take that answer to heart?

I grew up in an old-school Catholicism where religion was often viewed as a rigid and constraining collection of dogmas and moral principles. It was about dos and don’ts; about heaven and hell; about who’s going to be saved and live happily ever after in heaven, and who’s going to be condemned to eternal horrific torture in hell. Only lately I’ve learned that those dogmas and moral principles are only a part of Catholicism. When Jesus was asked about what is the most important commandment of all, he summarized the entire law in two sentences: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Mt 22:37-39)

THAT is what faith is about; that everything is based on love, because God is love. He first loves us so that we can love God, ourselves, and one another. All the do’s and don’ts in our lives, rules and regulations, good though they may be, are based on compassion for all things. Love is universal, it encompasses both the visible and the invisible. Nobody can understand fully about love and we are and will be spending the

rest of our lives to learn about love.

Faith is about setting us free, free to give love and free to accept love: from God, from one another, and from all things.

PS. I made my temporary profession on Easter Sunday 2021, and took the name of Anastasia, which means resurrection! My legal name is Esther and I was named that way because I was born on Easter Sunday. This profession signifies a new birth for me! I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for all the support and prayers throughout these years. May this new life I am embarking on give glory to God: by loving God, myself, and all of you my neighbors, wholeheartedly and sincerely.

*Sr. Anastasia  
Scholastica*



## HOLY LAND: SAVE THE DATES

Yes, we’re trying again!

We had just planned our **contemplative ecumenical pilgrimage** to the Holy Land late last winter when the pandemic struck, and everything shut down, and we had to cancel.

Well, we are planning again. Despite the recent upsurge of violence (which has since calmed to a cease fire) we hope to be pilgrims March 1 - 10 of 2022. Rev Scott Dow, who organizes these pilgrimages, tells me that every time he plans for one, violence stirs again, but then blows over, and the pilgrimage goes forward. He also says that both Israel and the Palestinians rely heavily on tourism for economic support, and do everything they can to avoid disrupting groups of pilgrims.

**For a brochure and more information, please call  
Scott Dow**

**Transformation Travel  
207.798.1919 or email  
[info@transformationtravel.net](mailto:info@transformationtravel.net).**

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