

The View

NEWSLETTER

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205 Windsor Neck Road *** Windsor, ME 04363 *** 207-445-8031

www.transfigurationhermitage.org



Forgetfulness seems to be a regular part of my life these days. Maybe it's a normal part of the aging process, or maybe it's because there always seems to be too much to do, with duties, work, and people beckoning from every corner of my life. I find myself making a 'to do' list each morning—and even then I forget things I need to do.

But sometimes I wonder if forgetfulness isn't significant in other ways. I've been slowly realizing, over the last few months, that I forget other things, deeper things, patterns of behavior that I've never paid attention to, that I've blotted out of consciousness, not just recently, but for my entire life. I'm thinking of ways of being with others that no doubt everyone else notices—everyone but me. I've simply not noticed, or if on occasion I do notice, I quickly allow them to slip back into oblivion.

I'm not thinking of

alcoholism, or other major compulsions. Merely ways of being with people—especially those I live with—that are less respectful of them as unique individuals; less respectful of them as unique children of God. I've simply forgotten that deeper, more important reality in the midst of the daily work and responsibilities.

Mindfulness, or remembering, is a major understanding in the Benedictine tradition, and in early Christianity, as well as in Buddhism and other religions. Why is this? The early Christian tradition understood that the *memoria Dei*, the memory or remembrance of God, is fundamental to our faith and its practice. By striving to remember God, and the practice of the Gospel tenets (with the Gospel as our guide, as St. Benedict says), we are gradually empowered to change our way of life from that of *oblivio*, or forgetfulness, to

mindfulness, the habitual awareness of God's presence and power in our lives.

In today's world, with the multiple obligations and distractions that beset us daily, it can seem impossible to keep the memory of God always in our hearts. And so we live on the surface, in *oblivio*, or amnesia. We may not even notice our tone of voice, or our impatience, or anger, or depression—or any of the other manifold ways in which our living in amnesia affect us. (I speak of myself here). We may even live out our lives in this amnesia, never noticing the underlying patterns of behavior that affect us—and, of course, all those around us.

How do we move our lives from *oblivio* to *memoria*? Cistercian writer Michael Casey suggests "a recurring effort of the heart to make contact with God, especially through the active recall of the words of Scripture, the teachings of holy

persons and the manifold benefits which come from the hand of God.” I believe the words “recurring effort of the heart” to be most significant. We simply keep trying to turn our hearts (and minds) to God. Without anxiety, and without trying to figure out how well or how poorly we’re doing. We quit judging our practice, we just keep trying.

And while it’s important to notice our failures, especially our habitual patterns of failure, it’s equally important not to judge ourselves, or put ourselves down. Leave the judging to our merciful God, our God who became human in Jesus, and who knows the weakness and frailty of human nature.

Who wants to live in perpetual amnesia? Who wants to live with constantly troubled relationships? Who wants to live in simmering anxiety, depression, or anger? Nobody. Perhaps the answer is not to confront these issues directly, in an egoic ‘fix-it’ approach. Perhaps the better approach is to focus our attention on God, on the Spirit who dwells in our heart, and follow the Spirit’s leadings, for the Spirit ‘will teach us everything,’ and will lead us in the ways of mindfulness and peace.

Sr Elizabeth

FRUITCAKES!

Yes, it’s that time of year again! Time to look forward to the holidays, to gift giving and receiving, and to holiday goodies.

Our **Traditional English Fruitcakes** always sell out early, so it’s not too early to order ahead for delivery in time for the holidays. Our fruitcakes are baked early in the year, and then spend six months or more gently aging, in brandy soaked cloths, in our fruitcake cellar. They are moist and delicious, and filled to bursting with fruit and nuts. For several years we’ve sold out in mid December, so please order **EARLY!**

We also have several kinds of cookies, six kinds of jams, Sr Bernadette’s famous hot sauce, and our wonderful herb concoction Herbes des Landes. And a more recent addition which has quickly become a big hit: Rum Cakes!

Order online at
transfigurationhermitage.org/products
or call us
207.445.8031
during business hours only
please!



FARMERS MARKET

Since returning to farmers market in late May, we have built up a clientele for Sr. Anastasia’s wonderful artisan breads, and for Sr Bernadette’s equally wonderful lunches, as well as cookies, cakes, pies, hot sauce, and other baked goods.

We always sell out of breads before the end of the market, so please come early to

Unity Market Day
32 School Street
Unity, ME
Saturdays
9am to noon.

Other vendors bring fresh veggies, herb plants, dried beans, and pickles.

Help support our contemplative life and help support Sr Anastasia and Sr Bernadette by visiting Unity Market Day, now through mid October. And thanks!

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.



*Summer blooms in abundant grace
Adoration for the giver and preserver of life
Blissful goodness of His presence*

Focus on Formation

LETTING GO

Continuing on my reflection titled FOMO two newsletters ago, after further discussion and support from everyone, I am finally enrolled in the next step of the course: Practicum for Spiritual Direction. As you might've remembered, I was writing about FOMO, Fear Of Missing Out, which is a form of obsession or attachment to something fragile and vain. Therefore, the biggest goal for me in this course is about letting go.

The course requires me to work as a spiritual director for at least three persons and by the grace of God, I was able to meet the requirement. We are taught that a spiritual director's role is to accompany and help other people to foster their relationship with God. I have never done this before so you can imagine how nerve-racking this whole experience is for me. I have to be completely aware of myself, what is happening in my body, emotions, and thoughts, as well as giving full attention to the story of the other person. A steep learning curve indeed!

What should I do in this overwhelming situation? The professor repeatedly stressed that it is God who is the actual DIRECTOR, and I am merely the 'tool' or extension of God's presence. I have to let go and let God be in charge! Not just letting go of all my obsessions, judgments, opinions, and

agendas, but also let God take the wheel of the spiritual direction sessions. It is hard to let go of my agenda, especially when I still have the thoughts, "I can do this (with my own mind)."

This spiritual direction practicum to me is not just a practice of letting go then. It is also a practice of humility; humble enough to say that: I am not perfect, I don't know what's best for the other person therefore I might not be in the position to lead a person's story to a particular direction. What I should do is to entreat, "God, help!"

*Sr. Anastasia
Scholastica*



RETREATS

As mentioned in the last newsletter, our lovely little retreat house is open for personal, private retreats—and fall is a particularly beautiful time for a retreat!

This welcoming space is a great place to relax and renew. Our beautiful, simple chapel is open from 9 to 5 daily. You are welcome to join us for Lauds/Morning Prayer at 8:30 and Vespers/Evening Prayer at 5. Many people choose to remain in solitude for their time here.

We have four private rooms, a sitting room, a full kitchen stocked with breakfast items, snacks, coffee and tea. Lunch and supper are brought to you, fresh from our kitchen. And, thanks to a very generous benefactor, we now have air conditioning in all the rooms! Our heating & plumbing suppliers, **C.B.Haskell Fuel**, went out of their way to install new Samsung heat pumps in the building—just in time to get the AC in before our weekslong heat wave hit in July!

All this for a nominal offering of \$60/person/night.

We do require a one night deposit to reserve your room.

To register or FMI call 207.445.8031, ext 201.

Or email th.retreats@gmail.com

BENEFACTORS

MAY-JULY, 2022

Anonymous (2)
Margaret & Roger Alexander
Louise Allen
Beverly Bartosiak
 mem Bartosiak family
Stephanie Bianchi
Linda Buttrick
 honor Bob Fuller
Ruth Calderwood
 mem Robert Tribbett
Naomi & Joseph Catalanotto
Rev Ed Clifford
Rita Crowley
Lori Culp
Robert & Phyllis Curtis
 mem Parent & Curtis families
Jennifer Daniels
Claire Deptula
 mem Stephen
 & David Deptula
Claire Deptula
 mem five Sisters
Rich & Myrtie Dickey
Donna Dufour
 mem Brooks Joseph Dufour
Sarah Fahnley
Peter Felt
Nick & Joanne Furnaratto
 mem Furnaratto & Fulanga
 families
Garbarinos & Boltangs
 honor Pat Shaw
Barbara Gawle
Angela Gilladoga
Dorothy & Marie Gondek
Thomas Goyne
Ned Gruener
Elizabeth Grimard
 mem Eileen Delmonte
Ramonda Grzymala
 mem my son Anthony
Tom Hanrahan
Elizabeth Harmon
 mem Fr. John McSweeney
Rachel & Robert Henry

Carol Hommick
 mem Mary Elizabeth,
 Florence, & Doris
Peggy Johnston
Mary Elizabeth King
 mem Craig, Patricia
 & Gerry
Ron & Cindy Kujak
Claire Kaiser
 mem Robert Kaiser
Marge Knuuti
Rev Jude Michael Krill
 OFM Conv
 mem Michael A Krill
 & Fr Tom Walsh, OFM Conv
Bob & Louise Lamothe
 mem Marie Louisa Ancil
Ida Letourneau
Lucinda Long
Dick & Sharon Marchi
Kathy Martin
Mark Maynard
Claire McCarthy
Mary Alice McLean
 mem Carol Smith
Claudette & Phil Michaud
Debbie Milliken
Joseph Morelli
Rev Frank Morin
Larry Moye
John & Patricia Mulrain
Rev Frank Murray
Austine M O'Connor
Al Parker
Ken & Pat Parker
Norman Pomerleau
Louise Reed
 mem Eileen Delmonte
Carol Rice Dempsey
Carol Rice
 mem Ann Jennings
Rev Ray & Kay Richard
Shannon Robbins
Linda Roden
 mem Tony Newell
Jane Russo
Joanne Ryan
 mem Michael Tacco

Marie Santry
 mem grandparents
Marc & Sarah Sirois
Pande & Rita Stevens
Emma Stevenson Smith
 mem Don Smith
Bob & Linda Stutzman
Eleanor Thibodeau
Vincent Voorhees
 mem Sr Cephas, RSM
Gabrielle Wicklow
Lily Woo
 honor Pat Shaw's
 eightieth birthday
Sharon Woo
Judith Young

EDUCATION FUND

Helen King Atallah
Mary Denise Carleton
Genie Dailey
Rich & Myrtie Dickey
Barbara Kafka
Larry Moye
Robert Scott

Sr Anastasia continues to take graduate courses, having completed two courses during spring semester: "Introduction to Spiritual Direction" and "Christian Mysticism". And, as usual, she did surpassingly well, with final grades of straight A's!

Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who have so generously responded to our needs! Please let us know if we've forgotten your name, or if we've misspelled it! And special thanks to those of you who gave, not once, but several times over!

A VERY GENEROUS GIFT!

Much to our astonished surprise, a friend **Barbara**, *who wishes to remain anonymous*, from the goodness of her loving heart, sent us a very generous donation in the spring. Thanks to her, we were able to put heat pumps (and thus air conditioning) in the retreat house, and now we are adding a hood and a new vent to our bakery. Both of these are much needed items, both come with a large price tag, and neither would be possible without Barbara's generous gift.

We thank you, Barbara, with all our hearts, and hold you and your loved ones in prayer daily. Your generosity is a gift, not only to us, but to all who come here for times of rest and renewal. May God bless and reward you abundantly!



IN KIND BENEFACTORS

AND VOLUNTEERS

Our thanks to **Gunner Wood** for keeping us well supplied with stamps, to **Tom Goyne** for a helpful watercolor book for Sr Anastasia, to **Sr. Mary Forman** and **Fr Jim Roy** for books, for **Bill & Suzanne Appel** for maple syrup, veggies and yummy raspberries, and to **Quality Copy** for discounting our printing needs.

And a very, very special thank you to the **Knights of Columbus**, especially **Gil Ouellette, Joseph Kus**, and **Roger Vandrel** for power washing, sanding and staining the ramp to the retreat house. It was a huge job, which they did during the big heat wave! We can't thank you fellows enough! The ramp looks wonderful and is all set for the next several years.

WHAT'S COOKING WITH SR B Fall 2022

Blueberry Ricotta Cake

*(adapted from Pastries by Standard Baking Company, Alison Pray & Tara Smith)
Photos from Sr. B's Test Kitchen in Indiana*

Ingredients

- 1.5 c cake flour, sifted, plus extra for dusting pan and blueberries
- 2 1/2 t baking powder
- 1 t salt
- 1/2 t nutmeg
- 3/4 c unsalted butter, softened (I use salted)
- 1 3/4 c sugar
- 1 c plus 3 T whole milk ricotta
- 3 eggs at room temp
- 1 t vanilla
- 1 1/2 c blueberries, fresh or frozen, dusted with flour

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350F.
Oil and dust with flour the cooking pan.
I use 9" round cake pans.
My test kitchen used a 9" springform pan with a parchment paper in the bottom.
Whisk together sifted flour, baking powder, salt & nutmeg
Using a mixer, cream together butter & sugar until light & fluffy.
Gradually add ricotta on medium-low, scraping down sides with rubber spatula, to ensure no lumps.
Add eggs - one at a time - scraping down bowl.
Add vanilla.
Add dry ingredients and combine by hand just until combined.
Scrape down sides, return to the mixer and mix on medium for 30 seconds.
Fold in flour dusted blueberries by hand. Do NOT over mix!
Pour into pan, smoothing top with rubber spatula.
Bake for 30 min.
Rotate pan, reduce temp to 325 degrees, and bake for 25-30 min more.
Cool in the pan on a wire rack
Turn out from pan after about 15 min.
I save in and serve from the pan.

This cake improves in flavor overnight! If you can keep the eaters away....

