

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

# The View NEWSLETTER

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# CHALLENGES

The past few months have been a time of challenges for us at the Hermitage, as well as challenges for our country and for the world at large. The pandemic roared back, seemingly stronger than ever with the Omicron variant. There are shortages of goods everywhere, as well as a shortage of available workers. Prices have skyrocketed and inflation is at its highest level in 40 years. In our country, perhaps in many countries, people are on edge and at odds with one another. As I write in mid February, war seems to be impending in Ukraine, climate change is upon our doorstep, and Maine has been having what I call 'a good ole fashioned Maine wintah.' We've had so much ice that we've had to call for sand on our driveway four times this winter, as opposed to once or not at all in previous years. We've had snow as well: a blizzard that dropped 18 - 24 inches, followed by another storm six days later that gave us an inch of sleet topped off with eight inches of snow.

So challenges are everywhere. Here at the Hermitage it's been the same. On Thanksgiving Day our propane furnace died and we had to get a new furnace *immediately*. The

following week, our 2008 Rav broke down. When I managed to get it to our mechanic who lives down the hill, he said the rear driveshaft had snapped off. Amazing! Well, the car is old. We'd hoped to wait until prices came down. But we couldn't. We had to find a new car, immediately!

A few days later, just before we bought the new (to us) car, the local dealer came to service our standby generator, and found that insects had made their home in it and destroyed the control panel.

We had already scheduled a payment for the first and largest set of solar panels that run our electricity. That payment was planned for, unfortunately it was due at the same time that everything else happened. Taken together, our series of challenges cost us about \$60,000 - all in the space of a month!

So we understand about the challenges that people have right now. Challenges with jobs, with school or daycare for their kids, challenges with trying to pay for the ever larger bills. Challenges with health and healthcare. Feeling overworked and often underpaid. Perhaps even unemployed.

Everyone has challenges

in life. Everyone, no exceptions. Jesus had plenty of challenges too: his family's lack of understanding, his disciples ignorance and self-centredness. At the end, those challenges, in the persons of the authorities, put him to death. So it's not a question of whether or not we'll have challenges, but how we handle them. How do we respond? Or do we respond? Do we perhaps just react: with panic, with anger, with venting our frustration. Or with sadness or depression or helplessness.

I am the first to admit to reacting instead of responding, at least initially. But when I have time to quiet, time to slow down, most of all, time to pray and to ask God's help, to ask God's wisdom to show me what to do, then I can respond. Recently another challenge popped up, an interpersonal one. When it was shared with me, and I was asked what I planned to do, I had to say that I needed to pray about it, to ponder it, to ask God what to do.

And so the next morning, as I sat for my usual prayer time, I almost didn't need to ask again. As soon as I turned to the Lord, there was my answer! So often I think I need to figure things out for myself. Indeed I do need to think things through. But most of all, I



need to ask God, knowing God will find me a way, send me in a certain direction, perhaps give me an answer.

But it doesn't always happen so quickly. Sometimes God doesn't seem to answer. Sometimes we need to persevere in asking. Sometimes we're asking the wrong question: we may ask God to change somebody else, when we need to change ourselves. Or we ask for a huge, long-term solution, when all we need is an answer for today. Tomorrow's answer will come tomorrow. Sometimes we need to be open to receiving wisdom from someone else, or from what seems to be random chance. Sometimes a walk, or exercise, music, or art; something that puts us in touch with our body, or with nature, helps open us up to receive what we need. God's light can find us in any situation, any time, any place.

This Lent, I propose that we all turn to God in any need, any challenge, and just ask. Openedly: what do I do? Show me the way, the next step. Help me. Keep asking, remain open.

Just ask and be open: God's response might surprise you!

Sr. Elizabeth



## FOCUS ON FORMATION:

# FOMO

It's winter, and the ground has been snowy and icy for days. This kind of weather is always hard on little Benedict. Every since he came home with us 3 years ago, he has been a full-fledged outdoor cat with a passion for patrolling our grounds and practicing 'certified' pest control specializing in rodents and other small critters. He wakes up, or rather wakes me up, an hour before sunrise and harasses me nonstop until I finally let him out. This has been his routine, without fail, 365 days a year. So you can imagine how hard it is when he misses out on his routine due to inclement weather.

This reminds me of the term FOMO which is an abbreviation of Fear of Missing Out. I used to have acute FOMO back in Indonesia. I would compulsively fill my agenda with gatherings and meet-ups for fear that if I just stayed at home for a few hours, I would be unpopular. Or I would buy so many things, even stuff that I won't use, just because it's on sale. I would feel so awful when my photographer friend told me that he was going to shoot a colorful sunset, because I was stuck in the office. Each day was a constant chaotic roller coaster of wants and disappointments, and I was trapped in it.

So this spring I am enrolled in a course titled *Discernment in Prayer*, and the first task is to read a short passage, then spend the next 10 minutes writing without pausing, without editing, without thinking. We are to pour out everything, whatever comes to our minds, onto paper, or typing. This activity can be a gateway of awareness to discover what is going on inside us. That's it for now. More to come in the next issue!

Sr. Anastasia  
Scholastica

Please enjoy the serenity of the Hermitage grounds on the next page. I created it as an invitation to meditation, reflection and contemplation.

Sr. AS







## TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE

needs your generosity and  
support

for continued growth.

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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

We have been blessed with  
numerous people coming for  
private retreats last year; for time  
to relax, rest, pray, sit in the chapel  
or walk our prayer trail and  
outdoor Stations of the Cross trail.  
Winter is still a good time for a  
retreat, and our trails are great for  
snowshoeing or cross country  
skiing. St. Moira's retreat house  
has four charming single rooms, a  
reading room, and a full kitchen,  
stocked with coffee, teas, snacks,  
and all you need for breakfast.

We bring you the other meals, all  
homecooked by Sr. Bernadette or  
Sr. Anastasia—and they are  
wonderful cooks! All this for a  
nominal offering of  
\$60/person/night—we do require a  
one night deposit per person to  
reserve your room.

To register or FMI

Call

**207.445.8031**

or email

[th.retreats@gmail.com](mailto:th.retreats@gmail.com)

\*\*\*CLIP AND SAVE\*\*\*

## WHAT'S COOKIN' with SR.B: A GREAT LENTEN DISH

### *Roti\* with Lentil (or Split Pea or Chickpea) Dal*

1. Mix flour, salt & oil.  
Add water 1T at a time to make  
a soft ball of dough. Set aside.

2. Rinse lentils and put  
them in 2 1/2C water.  
Bring to a boil, reduce to  
a simmer and cook until tender.

3. While lentils cook, divide  
the roti dough into small  
balls (8-10), roll out each into 6"  
rounds, fold into triangles and set aside.

4. Saute potato, onion, garlic, ginger  
and turmeric in 2-3T oil. When lentils are soft, add  
them to the potato mix and cook until potato  
breaks down and makes a gravy. Remove  
from heat. Add milk or vegetable stock if too thick.

**\*ROTI IS A BREAD**

**For the Roti**  
2 C Flour  
2T Oil  
Water 8T  
Pinch of salt

**For the Dal**  
1/2C Lentils  
2-3 cloves garlic  
(chopped or pressed)  
1 inch piece ginger  
(smashed)  
1/2t turmeric powder  
2-3T oil  
Yellow Potato 1/4" Chop  
Onion 1/4" Chop

5. Unfold the roti dough. Brush one side with oil.  
On a heated and lightly oiled FLAT skillet or griddle,  
brown each round roti on both sides, flipping when  
the roti bubbles.

**Use Lentil/dal mix as a dip with the roti.  
The dal is also great with rice.**



## BOOK REVIEW

*North*, by Brad Kessler, New York: Overlook Press, 2021. 280 pp., \$26.00

This recent novel by Brad Kessler was sent to me by a good friend, with a rave review accompaniment—and it's well worth it. The abbot of a fictional Vermont monastery is confronted with the choice of helping a Somali refugee, undocumented, on the run from ICE in order to avoid an almost certain deportation back to death in Somalia—or the choice of turning her in. The monastery's handyman, Teddy, out plowing after a freak May snowstorm, finds Sahri the refugee and an older woman driver off the road, in danger of hypothermia and death. He takes them to the monastery's empty guest house, and informs the abbot.

Kessler alternates chapters with the background stories of the abbot, Teddy, and Sahri, but most notably Sahri. As a toddler she witnesses the murder of her parents, is adopted by her grandparents who live primitive lives tending their flocks of goats and camels. As drought overtakes them, she moves again to live with her aunt in Mogadishu, but then violence escalates and as a young adult she makes the choice to seek asylum in America. After all, she thinks, the US welcomes refugees, the poor, immigrants. And so she makes the journey. First by air to Quito, then the long trek up through central America, where she nearly dies of exposure, through Mexico, until finally, in great innocence she walks up to the border crossing and asks for asylum.

She is manacled, detained, and sent on a long flight, with no food or water, or knowledge of where she's going, to a detention center near NY. She is there for

nearly two years, where she meets a woman who befriends refugees, and who takes her in. When her pro bono attorney tells her she's drawn a horribly unsympathetic judge, she is advised to cut off her ankle monitor and flee to Canada. And she does.

The loving descriptions of both Somalia and a cloistered monastery on a mountain in northern Vermont are only matched by the realistic descriptions of life in chaotic Somalia, the challenges and terrors of her long journey, grim detention in the US, and the brutality of the ICE agents who suspect where she is and send a drone to hover outside the monastery's windows looking for her.

It may seem strange to suggest a novel while we are entering into Lent, but this novel awakens us to the injustices inherent in our current immigration system, and perhaps widens our perspective to include, with Jesus, friendship with the poor, outcasts, immigrants.

Plus it's gorgeous writing, and a great read!

*St. Elizabeth*

!

## BENEFACTORS

November 2021-January 2022

Anonymous (2)  
Margaret Alexander  
Louise Allen  
    mem Raymond Allen  
John Allison  
Glenn Angell  
Tim Aramini  
    mem Julio Aramini  
Robert & Mary Arell  
Helen King Atallah  
Rosemary Babcock  
Marian Barker  
    mem Jim Dailey  
Beverly Bartosiak  
Beverly Bartosiak  
    mem Bartosiak family  
Eleanor Bilodeau  
Edward & Carol Boudreau  
Toni Brann  
    mem Jim Dailey  
Tony & Donna Burkart  
Linda Buttrick  
    honor Bob Fuller  
Ruth Calderwood  
Larry Campbell  
Eileen Cardogno  
Joan Carlson  
Philip & Mary Carthage  
Ethel Champaco  
    mem M&M Bill & Carol King  
Second Congregational Church  
    Warren  
Second Congregational Church  
    Warren  
    mem James Bond  
Kathryn Conway  
    honor Molly Santry  
Fr Paul Coughlin  
Ruth Covell  
Gary Crocker  
Rita Crowley  
Deacon Robert Curtis  
    mem all Covid deaths  
Genie Dailey  
Claire Deptula  
    mem Stephen & David Deptula  
Rich & Myrtie Dickey  
Scott & Sharon Dow  
Donna Dufour  
    mem Brooks Joseph Dufour



## **BENEFACTORS: CONTINUED**

Katharyn Dunham  
mem Chuck Boyer  
Sara Fahnley  
Armand Favreau  
Peter Felt  
Mary Fitts  
Kathleen Flanagan  
honor Bob & Moira Fuller  
Robert G Fuller, Jr  
mem David T Flanagan, Esq  
Joanne & Nick Furnaratto  
mem parents & Louise  
Barbara Gawle  
Angela Gilladoga, MD  
Trish & Perry Goodspeed  
Thomas Goyne  
Lorraine Gregory  
Elizabeth Grimard  
mem James Dailey  
Margot Gyorgy  
Maureen Harkavy  
Elizabeth C Harmon  
mem James Dailey  
Karen & Tom Hastings  
honor Bob Fuller  
Robert & Rachel Henry  
Carol Hommick  
Peggy Johnston  
Sue Kenny  
mem Jim Dailey  
William F Kiely, Jr  
Claire Kaiser  
Knights of Columbus  
Fr Druillette Ccl 2537  
Knights of Columbus  
Pine Cone Ccl 114  
Marjorie Knuuti  
Rev Jude Michael Krill, OFM  
Conv  
mem Michael A Krill &  
Fr Tom Walsh, OFM Conv  
Ron & Cynthia Kujak  
Barbara Kurz  
Pearley & Alice Lachance  
Bob & Louise Lamothe  
Patricia Lepak  
Br. Jerome Lessard  
Jon Lightner  
mem Mary Ellen Cimillo  
Lucinda Long  
Debbie Ludwig  
Carol & Paul Magner  
Dick & Sharon Marchi  
Heidi Marques  
Elizabeth Massey  
Claire McCarthy  
Mary Alice McLean  
Leslye & Robert Menerey  
Sandra Mercier  
Claudette & Phil Michaud  
Debra Milliken  
mem Neil & Lorraine Brown  
Carol Mitchell & family  
Connie Morin  
honor Barbara Gawle  
Patricia Mulrain  
gratitude Barbara Gawle  
Joann Mooney  
mem Margaret & Edwin Mooney  
& Jim Dailey  
James Murphy  
Fr Frank Murray  
Austine M. O'Connor  
Robert Ohrt  
Timothy E. Packey  
Al Parker  
Erik & Ellen Parker  
mem Gail Parker  
Ken & Pat Parker  
Norman Pomerleau  
Peggy Powis  
Donna Ptak  
mem Jenny Semancik  
Arthur Quinn  
Annalisa Randall  
mem Elizabeth Kane  
Tom & Louise Reed  
Deacon Joe Reid  
Carol Rice Dempsey  
Rev Ray Richard  
Shannon Robbins  
mem Liliane Grover Robinson  
Jane Russo  
Marie Santry  
mem grandparents  
Allen F Rileys  
M&M Robert Scott  
honor St Joseph  
Beury & Ellee Simons  
Marc Sirois  
Emma Stephenson Smith  
mem Don Smith  
Pat Shaw  
SWM-David V Smith  
mem Gail Parker  
Rev Paul Stefanko  
Pande & Rita Stevens

Tim & Donna Sturzl  
Vivian Swank  
mem Virginia Warzocha  
Mike & Ellen Szela  
mem John Finnegan &  
John Simmern  
Patricia Turner  
Janet Van Fleet  
mem Daniel Davis  
Lou & Linda Wagner  
Judy Watson  
mem Evan Lawn  
Joe Weronko  
Gabrielle Wicklow  
Lily Woo  
honor Pat Shaw  
Diane Williams  
Mike Will  
Elaine Witt  
Therese Young  
mem Gail Parker

Thanks to everyone who donated so generously, especially those who sent offerings many times. If we've forgotten you, or misspelled your name, please let us know! And a very special thanks for a gift from **Fr. Bruce Siket, in memory of his mother Irene!** And thanks also to **Melani & Boediarto Prabowo & family**, who sent a gift from all the way around the world in Indonesia!

## **IN KIND GIFTS & VOLUNTEERS**

We are most grateful for those who so generously helped us decorate and wrap fruitcakes this season, especially **Scott & Sharon Dow, Anne Kuebel & Claudette Michaud**; also to **Bob Lamothe**, for handyman help, to **Sue Kenny** for our Thanksgiving turkey, to **Mary Fitts** for gift cards, to **Peggy Powis** for layout & other newsletter help, **Quality Copy** for discounting our printing, and very specially to **Kelly McLoflin** for keeping St Moira's retreat house sparkling clean! Thank you so much, all of you! We wouldn't be here if not for you!