

THE VIEW

TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE, MAINE



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DROUGHT

by Sr. Elizabeth Wagner

This summer has been notoriously hot and dry here in Maine. We had a heat wave in June, when the temperature reached 100 degrees in central Maine; something that I've never experienced in over 40 years of living here. It was 100 in downtown Augusta, a small city, 99 here in Windsor.

While it hasn't been that extreme since, it has been repeatedly in the high 80s, even low to mid 90s. And all without any rain. We are now in the area of Maine classified as extreme drought. Our lawn is at least 80% brown. I've been able to water the garden, but nothing else. Much of the rest of Maine is in moderate drought. When I heard some foolish people setting off firecrackers not too far from us, I nearly panicked.

We are fortunate to have a very good well. When it was drilled, just before we actually began construction, I asked the well driller how many gallons per minute. "Well," he said, "we can measure up to 50 gals per minute. But it was coming in so fast we couldn't even measure it." So up to now I haven't worried about watering. But over the last year there has been a lot of construction in Windsor. In our country 'block,' I've counted 16 new homes, six of which are just down the road from us. I know there is an aquifer somewhere underneath us, but even aquifers can run dry. So I worry every time I need to water.

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We are also building an endowment fund for future growth.

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As I write this, yesterday we had several hours of mist. Not rain, but at least mist. We may get some rain on Friday; at least we hope so.

But there are other kinds of drought as well. For some time now, during my morning hour for prayer and lectio, I sit and wait, in emptiness. Perhaps idleness? I don't know. And yet it doesn't feel 'dry'; I don't feel cut off from the Lord. 'What does it feel?' I ask myself. Maybe a bit boring. Maybe, well I was about to write, restless, but then I realized that's not accurate. I'm not restless. Maybe not even waiting. Maybe it's just a kind of being there. Just showing up. I read the daily Scriptures. I pray Vigils. Mostly I'm just there. Nothing seems to be happening. Maybe it's a kind of inner drought. But it's OK. I'm not even praying for interior rain – although I sure do pray for rain on the grounds, gardens, and lawns.

”

WE CAN LEARN FROM ANYTHING,
IF WE'RE OPEN,
EVEN FROM DROUGHT.

“

I think we can all go through these inner droughts at times. Maybe not in prayer, though that can often happen too. Maybe we need help with something, and nobody offers to help, or even seems to notice. Maybe it's that we have too much to do, or too many responsibilities. Maybe we feel that all the cards are stacked against us, and we can't come out on top, no matter how hard we try. Maybe we're burned out, scorched by endless needs with no end in sight.

But there is yet another kind of drought, one mentioned in the Old Testament, where the prophet Amos says, "Not a famine of bread. Nor a thirst for

water. But of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11). Sometimes I wonder if we aren't experiencing this drought in our country and in our world today, where it seems that all that matters is money and status and most of all, power. And in the process, so many people, especially the poor and the powerless, get crushed or forgotten.

Perhaps we sometimes forget that what we do and how we live has consequences. If we strain relationships with others, there can be consequences. Further, if we strain and overtax our relationship with the earth, if we thoughtlessly act as though earth's resources are infinite; well, there can be consequences to this as well.

As I return, over a week later, to finish this essay, we have had rain. Not nearly enough, but at least some. The drought continues. My personal drought continues also. And yet, even within it, when I am able to be open and receptive, sometimes I notice signs of life. Perhaps not during my time of prayer; but outside of it, or maybe I should say, alongside of it: a greater awareness of others' needs, and what I can do to help. A sense of delight in the smallest things: the luscious flavor of the melons now ripening in the garden; and in the hummingbirds drinking nectar from flowers. The delicious quality of early morning coolness.

We can learn from anything, if we're open, even from drought. The lawn turns brown, but it doesn't actually die. The quiet and emptiness of prayer time hollows out greater receptivity, hopefully greater receptivity to God's word. One 'word' that keeps resonating in my heart is this, from the prophet Micah, "You have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: Only this, to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8). Whatever the season, in plenty or in drought, this directive from the Lord is constant.





BENEFACTORS MAY - JULY 2025

Thank you, one and all, for your generosity! Know that we hold you in prayer, each and every day; asking God to bless and reward you! And please, if we've forgotten you or misspelled your name, please let us know!

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We are so grateful for continuing gifts of stamps from **Gunner & Debbie**, for abundant raspberries and flowers from **The Appel** family, tire repair from **Windsor Neck Auto**, for **Ken & Pat Parker** in watering the garden while we were away, and high quality discounted printing from **Quality Copy**. Thank you all so much!

VOICE OF VOCATION

By Sr. Anastasia Esther Wibowo

Bruce, our friend at the Windsor Post Office, recently retired. He has always been a great person to be with, always calm and super helpful even when he himself was swamped with mountains of packages to be sorted out. Especially during our peak fruitcake season, we would come with stacks and stacks of boxes to be shipped. He just smiled and removed the seemingly endless shipping boxes from our hands.

A few years back, Moira, one of our benefactors, passed away. She had been so generous to us. We attended her funeral and heard the eulogy for her. What struck me most was that she was remembered not as a wealthy and successful lady, but as somebody who was always attentive and caring for everybody without exception. She always lent a hand to anyone needing aid. She was remembered as a warm and caring person.

At the end of the day, we remember somebody not because of their success or achievement in the world, but by how much they care for others.



ALL THE CRITTERS...

Those of you who live nearby know that we have a dog and a cat. Although perhaps I should say, 'a cat and a dog,' because as you may know, cats have a way of taking precedence. Lina (short for Angelina), is our sweet and gentle purebred Maremma dog, which is a livestock guardian breed from Italy. She is pure white and weighs about 90 pounds. Much like a Great Pyrenees, just 50 pounds lighter. She has decided that we are her herd, and although she's very friendly, she would no doubt guard us with her very life.

The cat, on the other hand, is Brother Benedict, a yellow tiger who came to us from a shelter. Like Lina, he also has a job protecting us: from mice and chipmunks and even squirrels! Needless to say, once he settled in here, he found ways to rule the roost—including Lina. One flash of those claws, and Lina backs away.

This summer we have once again been blessed—or maybe not so blessed—with the visits of wild creatures. I've seen a skunk in the compost bin; And we have a young porcupine feasting on the grass on our lawn. We have no fears for Br Ben, as he is wise to the ways of wild critters. But Lina—she's a true innocent, ready to stick her nose in where she shouldn't. We're hoping that a Havahart trap with the right bait inside will tempt the porcupine before Lina gets too inquisitive when the porcupine is around.

And so goes the latest mini adventure here in the not-so-wilds of Windsor, Maine. Stay tuned for the adventure...

BAKE SALES
Sep 20-21 OLGH
Oct 11-12 St. Francis
Nov 1-2 St. Bernard

FRUITCAKES!

Yes, its that time of year again! Time to think about decorating and wrapping those luscious, brandy-soaked fruitcakes. Time to think about ordering them. Sr. Anastasia outdid herself last winter, and the cakes are **better than ever**...they've spent this hot summer gently aging in our cool, dark fruitcake cellar, wrapped in brandy soaked cloths, and snuggled into airtight containers. In late September or early October, we'll begin taking them out, splashing them with more brandy, decorating them, and wrapping them and boxing them. Our fruitcakes this year cost **\$30**, plus shipping, and also tax if you're living and buying here in Maine. We begin shipping in **mid October**. Get them early, as supplies are limited.

BOOK REVIEW CONT.

Brief, easy to read, and yet profound, this little book challenges us all to rethink our relationship with creation, with the products we humans make from it, and with our own unthinking acts, both large and small, that unfortunately contribute to the destruction of our beautiful blue and green home.



BOOK REVIEW

Come, Have Breakfast: Meditations on God and the Earth, By Elizabeth A. Johnson. Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 2024: 239 pp.

I must admit that I'd never paid any attention to that lovely little vignette in the Gospel of John (Jn 21:12). The disciples have been on the sea all night, fishing. At dawn they come in to shore, weary and no doubt achy as well. They see a stranger on the shore, who asks them if they've caught anything, which they haven't. He tells them to cast their net again, over the right side of the boat, and they haul in a huge catch of fish. As they drag it in, they see the stranger on the beach, with a fire, and food already prepared. The stranger says to them, "come, have breakfast."

Just three little words: 'come, have breakfast.' Yet given the situation and the characters in this story, what a world of meaning they reveal! Here we see Jesus who has cooked the food and invites them to the meal. He takes the role of a servant—and also the role of a gracious host. "Come, have breakfast," he says to them—as well as to us, and by inference, to all of creation. As we picture this story, we see the sea, we see the beach, and the vegetation beyond the sand. We see a fire, circled with stones, and on the stones, a pan, with fish frying. All of creation is included in this story: Jesus, the ocean, the land, the green plants, the food, and the people, his disciples. Johnson uses this wonderful, inclusive vignette as a stepping stone to a series of brief meditations on God and God's wonderful creation. A creation which is now under stress from the ever expanding use—and oftentimes, misuse—by we humans.

In sections titled 'Creation—A relationship; Jesus and the Earth; God's Beloved Creation, and others, Johnson lays out a series of brief meditations that illuminate the relationship between God, the beloved Creator, and earth, God's beloved creation.

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