

# THE VIEW

TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE, MAINE



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HERMITAGE

IS A TAX-EXEMPT NON-  
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## DIFFERENCES

by Sr. Elizabeth Wagner

Lately it seems that all we hear about is how divided we are in this country, and how different our opinions are on all sorts of things. We have red states and blue states, Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals. We have vehement divisions within states, within communities, within families.

With such deep differences and divisions, how are we able to hold together? How do we find the ways to cross the divides between us: in our families, our communities, our cities and our country as a whole?

Perhaps another question needs to be asked first: do we even want to cross the deep clefts between us?

I ask this because it sometimes seems to me that what many of us really want is to win. To win: an argument, a way of thinking, a game, an event, an election. We just want to win. To come out "on top." To prove to the other that they are wrong and we are right.

But a 'win only' attitude does not help us to live in peace with each other.

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*[TransfigurationHermitage.org](http://TransfigurationHermitage.org)*

*We are also building an endowment fund for future growth.*

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Actually, we are often divided against ourselves. Part of us might want to spend lots of money, create a splash, look good – or at least wealthy – to our neighbors and friends. Another part might want to save, to be less splashy, to put money away for our future. Part of us might be extroverted; might want to go out every night to dinner or dancing or be with friends at a party. Another part might want to curl up with a good book at home.

So there are always differences: within ourselves, within our families, our communities, and lately, very noticeably, within our nation.

Even in our tiny community there are differences. I was born here in the U.S. And I live with two Asians; one from Singapore, one from Indonesia. And we are each very different! Yet somehow we manage to get along. Sometimes easily, sometimes after a struggle.

Of course, we have our common faith and our shared vocation in common. Yet even within a common faith and a shared vocation, there can be many different ways of looking at things. And sometimes the differences can be major. So how do we come to a common decision?

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“

In resolving our differences, I believe we have an edge over the country as a whole: because we have the guidance of our faith and our contemplative religious tradition. Even so, each of us has different gifts and different needs, and yet we also need to live together peacefully.

I believe that the answer to how to resolve differences lies in seeking the good of the whole community and as much as possible, seeking also the good of each person individually. So far, this seems to be working for us. We are three very different persons, yet we share a common faith, a common vocation, and a common way of life. We have each learned that we need to bend a little. I might want more quiet time, but my sisters might need my help. So I can try to help. Sr. Bernadette might be tired of cooking lunch and baking cookies and cakes, but when there is a need, she responds. Sr Anastasia might want to spend more time in the kitchen, but if I need help in the office, she is there to help. We don't always resolve our differences perfectly, but we always try to.



But to return to the country as a whole, or to individual towns, cities, and states: we resolve some of our differences at the ballot box. We vote. And when the person or party we favor doesn't win, we concede. This does not necessarily mean we resolve our differences—far from it! Yet with the great exception of the Civil War, it means that we try to live (either happily or painfully) with the result. And much as the three of us try to work together to resolve our differences, on a much greater scale, and often with more debate and acrimony, as towns and cities, states, and our country as a whole, we negotiate our differences so as to try to live together peacefully.

I sometimes ask myself: 'what can I do to help heal the deep divisions in this country?' Obviously I can't do much, nor can most of us. But I suggest that we can begin by listening to each other, even when we don't agree. I mean truly, deeply listening. Not trying to convince the other. Not trying to win. Simply trying to be present, and attempting to deeply understand what another person fears, or hopes, or dreams.

This kind of listening, and this kind of commitment, is not easy. And it doesn't produce quick results—sometimes no results at all, at least not for a long time. And I suggest that, as people of faith, we need to listen especially to the voice of the Lord, speaking through the pages of the Scriptures, speaking through our churches, speaking through each other, and speaking through the voice of our conscience. The first word of the Rule of St. Benedict is 'listen.'

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WE NEED TO LISTEN ESPECIALLY TO  
THE VOICE OF THE LORD...

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I suggest we begin by listening, not by rushing into speech. I suggest that as much for myself as for anyone else. Let us learn to listen: to ourselves, to one another, to our faith leaders. Most of all, to the voice of the Spirit, that still, quiet voice, calling to us each day in so many different ways.



**A blessed Advent of  
listening to each of you,  
and a Christmas of being  
heard!**

**Sr. Elizabeth**

## IN KIND GIFTS & VOLUNTEERS

We are so grateful for many people: to the **Appel family** for wonderful red raspberries from their bushes, for Appel's apples, and for a table loom, weaving supplies and instructions, and yarns. And, of course, for continuing to give our dog Lina a run down our prayer trail with her friend, their dog Maya! We are grateful for **Quality Printing**, who discounts all of our printing, and for **Gunner & Deb**, for constantly renewing our supply of stamps!

## RETREAT HOUSE

Due to our need to ship hundreds of fruitcakes, and to bake and ship more hundreds of cookies and rum cakes, our retreat house is closed from mid November through late January (when we take a lovely long quiet time to recover from all the busy-ness). The retreat house will re-open on **February 1**. Thanks for your patience if you are hoping to schedule a retreat!

## ALL KINDS OF DIFFERENCES!



Article on p. 5



## BENEFACTORS AUGUST - OCTOBER 2025

*Our grateful thanks and prayers are with each one of you who have contributed so generously to our support, and especially to those who have given more than once. As we've said many times, **YOU** are the reason we are here. We are daily aware of that, and daily we hold you in prayer.*

**Anonymous (4)**

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**Helen King Atallah**

**Beverly Bartosiak, mem**

**Bartosiak family**

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**Martha Block**

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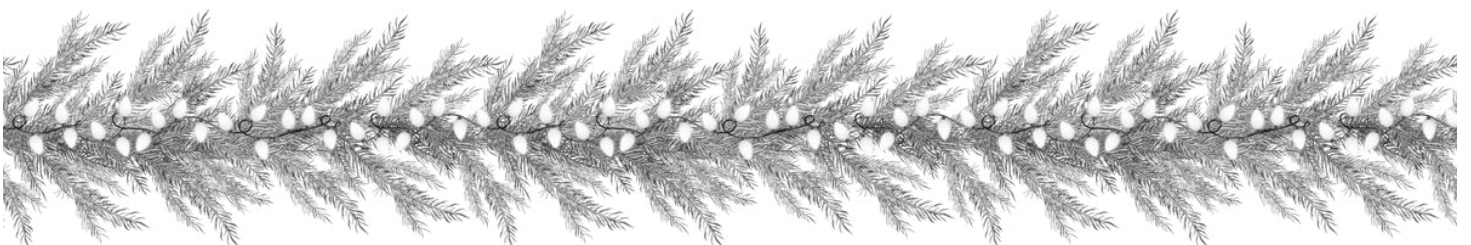
**Janet Van Fleet, mem Jeannette**

**Davis**

**E. Joanne Whitehead**

**N. Laurence & Lorna Willey**

**Rebecca Woo**



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# VOICE OF VOCATION

By Sr. Anastasia Scholastica Esther Wibowo

Sr. Elizabeth once said in one of her mini homilies, "The Holy Spirit is always with us. But we also have to be available for the Holy Spirit."

The cold weather always made me a bit lazy to get out of bed and pray. In the Liturgy of the Hours class, a guest speaker, Sr. Vassa Larin, told us that praying the Office is very much needed today – for everyone not just for the clergy and the religious – partly because amidst the information overload

from the Internet and other media around us, the Office grounds us back to what is the most important in our lives; the *raison d'être* of our being and the goal of all creation: God.

Through praying the Office, we are joining the body of Christ; and with Christ as the head, we are praying with the whole church throughout all generations: past, present, and future. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit... remain in my love." (Jn 15:5, 9)

## ALL KINDS ...

Here at the Hermitage, we not only come from different parts of the world, have different backgrounds and educations, are fluent in different languages besides English – there is another pair here who are vastly different, yet manage to live in harmony – at least some of the time. Br. Benedict our very independent plump orange cat usually rules over our gentle, loving, and sleek dog Lina who is 7 times his size. Lina, of course, is willing to adapt herself to our schedule, our needs, even (shock!) – *to that cat!* Br. Ben, on the other hand, tolerates Lina.

During our evening recreation time, if they are not fighting over our attention and TLC in friendly sibling rivalries, you can often find Br. Ben either perched on a chair (or sometimes under the chair), and Lina usually giving him lots of space, but also curled up not too far away.



## IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN!

Time to get your Christmas order in for those fabulous, brandy soaked **Traditional English Fruitcakes!** Baked late last winter, they've been aging in our fruitcake cellar ever since, wrapped in brandy soaked cloths, and safe in airtight containers. We are now in process of unwrapping them, splashing them with more brandy and decorating them. Please order early, as we ALWAYS SELL OUT!

And as you may know, we also make and ship Sr A's wonderful festive Rum Cakes. Plus six kinds of cookies, Christmas Stollen, and jams.

Order online at [TransfigurationHermitage.org](http://TransfigurationHermitage.org) or call us at **207.445.8031**. (Business hours only, please.) or visit our gift shop at **197 Windsor Neck Road, Windsor, ME**, open everyday 10-5 (honor system).

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**Stollen**



Sr. Elizabeth

Sr. Bernadette

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