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THE VIEW

TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE, MAINE

TRANSFIGURATION HERMITAGE

IS A TAX-EXEMPT NON-PROFIT CATHOLIC INSTITUTION WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF PORTLAND, MAINE.

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Courtesy of Br. Rex Norris

WHERE WE BELONG

Sr. Elizabeth Wagner

I first came to Maine a long time ago to visit a sister who was at the time living as a hermit in a small town farther downeast from where I now live. As I was driving down Route 3 from Augusta, and then up Route 1 to Orland, I kept having the feeling that something was about to happen. I pooh-poohed it, thinking to myself 'don't be ridiculous, Elizabeth. You're just here for a few days to meet someone." But the feeling didn't go away.

I reached my destination, we introduced each other, and almost the first thing Theresa said was, "there's a little apartment coming vacant at the Sisters', and there's sewing work you can do in solitude here." And bingo! Just like that, I knew I had to do it. But I didn't want to move to Maine! "This is Siberia, Lord!" I thought.

I had left my Carmelite Monastery, and didn't quite know what to do with myself, so I'd applied for and received a full scholarship to

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graduate studies at Fordham. I thought at the time that with the right degree I could work at a retreat house, and still have some solitude. I hated to let that scholarship go, but I knew I had to. I waffled over it for two weeks, but finally called Fordham, to tell them I wasn't coming.

And so I packed up – I didn't have much, $30 in my pocket to be exact – and drove to Maine. It was early fall by the time I'd settled in, and fall in Maine, in the country, was ideal. The sisters' property had woods and a field and a view, and I took long walks on most days. I had a small but nice apartment, and worked at sewing, making handwoven clothing for a group of local weavers. I wasn't getting rich, but it was just enough to get by.

> IF YOU MADE IT THROUGH THIS WINTER, YOU CAN TAKE ANYTHING!

That first winter was the coldest, snowiest, longest one I've ever had in about forty years – at least until last winter, which matched it in cold, though not in snow. In March I finally went to change the registration on my car. The fellow asked me why I'd waited and I said, "I wanted to see if I could take the winter."

"If you made it through this winter, you can take anything," he said.

And so I came to Maine. Though I certainly doubted it at the time, it was one of the best things I ever did. At the time, I thought of how different it all was. I'd grown up in the country, on a farm, but I'd been in a Carmelite monastery for over five years. And I was used to a more Catholic area, and more of a Catholic culture. In Connecticut, Catholic churches are everywhere —or at least they were back then. Here, they were mostly in the larger cities.

At first, I thought I'd be here for awhile, and I kept looking for just the right community. But nothing came along that I felt called to. I visited a Carmelite community in a city south of Maine, where I was invited to enter. But I knew I wasn't called there. I looked at other situations, other communities. Finally—and it took a long time, a couple of years—I realized: this is where I'm called to stay.

Now, over forty years later, I know that God found just the right place for me. God surely knew me far better than I knew myself. This is surely the place where I belong.

Perhaps many of us are not sure where we belong. We can face major life decisions; and be very unsure of what to do. I was fortunate to have that inner guidance perhaps, but I now think that if I hadn't had it, I would never have come, never had made a commitment to living in Maine.

We all seek to belong. Indeed, we're made for belonging. In the 'good old days' it might have been easier to find our niche—at least if our niche was something fairly usual, normal, and even more, nearby. Today, we have so many, many different opportunities. We are surrounded, bombarded with all the many choices we can make, all the many things we can do. I think now of how important it is to pay attention to our own needs and desires, our



Sr. Elizabeth's first home in Maine.

fears and worries as well, when we're facing major decisions.

And most of all, we need to ask God to show us our way, our own unique path in life. God will never abandon us! Perhaps what we need most of all is to trust that even when our path seems obscure, or challenging, or fearful, or dismaying, we need to keep leaning on God, keep talking to God, keep listening to what God says to us through how we feel, what we think, and also by what happens to us. We belong to God, and God will show us, step by step, day by day, where it is that we really belong.

> FAITH IS MORE LIKE FALLING IN LOVE THAN IT IS LIKE FINDING THE ANSWER TO A COMPLICATED QUESTION.
>
> ~ DAVID BROOKS

BAKE SALES

We are holding bake sales this fall! Hope to see you at one of them….

September 26 & 27 at **St. Francis, Belfast**

October 10 & 11 at **Our Lady of Good Hope, Camden**

October 31 & November 1 at **St. Bernard, Rockland**

Hope to see you there! And yes, we'll be bringing fruitcakes! As well as all the other goodies: cakes, cookies, chicken & veggie pies, lasagna, quiche, and Sr A's fabulous breads. Help yourself to some goodies and help support our life of prayer for all people.



VOICE OF VOCATION

Sr. Anastasia Esther Wibowo

Sometimes I wondered about how my life is ending up here in Maine, ten thousand miles away from my hometown. Sometimes I wish I could follow Jesus' calling to somewhere not far from home. But more often than not, life is not so straightforward. Sometimes it takes a twist and turn, a topsy-turvy maze where I cannot see where it will lead.

In her deathbed, St. Monica said to St. Augustine and his brother, "Here you shall bury your mother." The brother was worried that her body would rest in a foreign land away from home. But then, St. Monica reminded him (and me) that our true home, where we truly belong is not here not there, but in God, wherever that might be.

"Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us… I want those you have given me to be with me where I am… to see my glory…" (Jn 17:21, 24) and I shall want no more.



BENEFACTORS MAY - JULY 2026

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, mem souls in purgatory
Anonymous
Margaret & Roger Alexander
Glenn Angell
Helen King Atallah
Eleanor Bilodeau
Ann Callahan
Nancy Charette
Gary & Ellen Crocker, mem Francis & Lorena Crocker & Ron & Kathleen Gamage
Rita Crowley
Hans Wolfgang Demisch
Marc DeSisto
Sara Fahnley
Peter & Rosemarie Felt
Mary Fitts
Joanne Furnarotto, mem Nicholas Furnarotto
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Jon Lightner
Joseph Morelli
Kathleen Martin
Catherine Moskosky, mem Helen DeCanto
Pat & John Mulrain
Rev Frank Murray
Austine M O'Connor
Norman Pomerleau
Donna Ptak, mem Ed Lennon
Carol Rice Dempsey
Bob & Linda Stutzman
Ronald L. Vigue
Lorna & Larry Willey

IN KIND GIFTS

The Appels for the abundance of pears and raspberries from their garden, **Monette Dibden** for handmade soaps and Maine trinkets to be sold at our gift shop, **Stephen Bender** for books and CDs, **Priscilla Giroux** for religious articles, **Angela Giladolga** and **Genie Dailey** for baguette pans, **Peggy Johnston** for a boxful of colorful yarns, **Ken & Pat Parker** for Bernard McGinn's *Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany*. Thank you so much for your generosity!

TRANSFIGURATION!

We are delighted to relate that on August 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, Bishop James Ruggieri officially recognized Transfiguration Hermitage as a private association of the faithful. While Sr Bernadette and I have long been Diocesan Hermits, our Sr Anastasia only had private vows. At long last, we all now have Benedictine vows, as members of Transfiguration Hermitage, which as you probably know, is a contemplative Catholic monastery following the Rule of St. Benedict.

This is a long awaited moment for us, as we are now canonically recognized as a community of the faithful in the Diocese of Portland. Sr. Bernadette and I were dispensed from our vows as diocesan hermits, and Sr. Anastasia from her private vows, and we all then professed our perpetual vows as Benedictine sisters of Transfiguration Hermitage.

The mass and the perpetual profession was presided over by Bishop James Ruggieri, and concelebrated by Fr. Joseph Manship; with Deacon Jeff Lewis, and Master of Ceremonies Peter Czerwinski present. In his homily,



Bishop Ruggieri mentioned that Jesus was transfigured to show the disciples what the cross is leading to, and to assure them that God is always with us in all things.

Mass was attended by a small group of our close friends and benefactors, and followed by a small gathering with the sisters' home baked goodies. Warmth and joy permeated the house as the event wrapped up, on a hot and glorious summer afternoon.



IT'S FRUITCAKE TIME!

Well, almost…in October we'll be opening up the containers down in the fruitcake cellar, where the cakes have been gently aging, letting the flavor develop and mature. Our fruitcakes are made with lots of fruit and nuts, and of course…lots of brandy! Despite rising prices for the ingredients, we are holding the price at just $30 for a yummy two-pound fruitcake. So treat yourself, and your family and friends, to an authentic, delicious hand-made fruitcake!

Order online at **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).



BISHOP JAMES RUGGIERI



FR. JOE MANSHIP



SR. ANASTASIA



SR. ELIZABETH'S VOW



DEACON JEFF LEWIS



SR. BERNADETTE'S VOW



SR. BERNADETTE



SIGNING THE VOWS





SR. ELIZABETH