

Dear Friends and Visitors

The monster tornado, which, twisted and bulldozed a path of destruction six miles long and a half mile wide through Joplin was not as horrendous as Japan's earthquake and tsunami. Yet it added to a series of recent natural disasters, which humble a certain scientific mentality, claiming to have conquered, or to be in control of nature.

St. Mary's Church, school, and rectory were wiped out. St John's Hospital also was hit so hard that the remaining skeleton structure must be leveled. The death toll has risen to 158, plus many more still missing. The three Mercy Sisters from St. John's had a basement in their convent and were safe. Plans and work to rebuild are under way, along with a lot of generous volunteer help and donations from near and far. St. John's Hospital will rise again.

Fr. Robert has flown south and west for his annual two months service as chaplain for our Trappistine sisters at Santa Rita, Arizona. They have completed, just lately, some construction and renovations of their monastery. Their higher desert location provides a summer milder than ours in Missouri does. However, a financial group is preparing to undertake an open pit copper mine about five miles from them. The proposal involves 20 years at least of operations, using a great amount of the desert's scarce water, along with polluting the land and air. The site is on the other side of a foothill, so it will not be visible from the monastery, but the noise and trucks driving past every 15 minutes day and night will be a problem.

We have a couple of new men helping. Paul Schmitt from California wants to spend time experiencing our monastic atmosphere of quiet and prayer. He is looking after the inner courtyard, trimming the rose bushes, cutting the grass and nurturing plants with decorative leaves. He has installed a few nightlights around the small waterfall and pond. Our goldfish may have to swim under some of the bottom rocks to get any sleep.

Terrence Monaghan from Kentucky is a Family Brother living within our community until August, when he will travel to Spain for the World Youth gathering. He caught on quickly to the technique of wrapping a new fruitcake in protective film, then sealing it on a hot plate. Terrence has just finished college and will soon begin his life career.

I attended our Regional Meeting at Holy Cross Abbey in Virginia for a week in June. The superiors of our 12 monks' and 5 nuns' monasteries in the USA gathered to prepare for the General Chapter of our whole Order at Assisi, Italy this September. Each community prepared a House Report describing their situation and developments since the last General Chapter three years ago. Each superior read his/her House Report. Then, we had sharing among all those

present. We also discussed some other topics, which are on the agenda for next September. This friendly gathering of monastic persons, who have much the same responsibilities and challenges, is a support and source of counsel for all concerned.

The one difficulty for me at this Regional Meeting was the fact that all of the other USA superiors present voted to support our Fr. Immediate's (Fr. Brendan) recommendation to keep our novitiate closed another three years. Our Commission of the Future is split in half about this question. Dom Brendan, along with co-Visitors Dom Joseph and Mother Kathy, of course favor closing. Bishop Liebrecht, Fr. Alberic and I believe our novitiate should be opened now. All of our monks here also think it should be opened. All this is part of the spade work and process on the human level, which all concerned must go through to arrive at clarity regarding God's Will. Therefore, we all move on to our General Chapter's decision in September. Your prayers will be a big help.

We have hired a part-time security guard, who patrols our large area of woods (vs. meth labs, timber rustlers, etc.) and the low water bridge, where neighbors come for picnics, swimming, fishing and socializing. Some are unhappy with the efforts of our neighborhood watch to curb the presence and activity of the rough crowd, which has ruined the wholesome spirit of the area. More are pleased that the tide is turning, and families are starting to bring their children down there once again.

Just now, I am spending several days with Bro. Dominic. Bro. Boniface, his regular companion, is our ordinary cook and baker. We ran out of brown bread, so Boni had to go home to make a new supply for his brothers. This gives our sub-cook, Jill, a few days to spend with her son, who just returned home from a tour of duty in Afghanistan. Bro. Dominic looks better to me now than any time since he entered the nursing home. Yet, his strength keeps ebbing away from myeloma.

Let us keep praying for each other, and the needs of our poor world.

Pentecost

We have seen the power of the wind just recently as a tornado left a path of destruction six miles long and a half-mile wide through Joplin.

On the Day of Pentecost, the sound of a mighty wind filled the House where disciples gathered. It came not for death but for life. The Holy Spirit came also in the form of fiery tongues. All the disciples began to rejoice and to praise God and speak boldly of God's work of salvation in Jesus

Christ.

Pentecost means fifty. It is the name of the feast, which Israel celebrated fifty days after Passover, as a memorial of God giving the Law- the Ten Words of the Covenant through Moses at Mt. Sinai. Our Lord Jesus had established the New Covenant at the Feast of Passover, and now publicly promulgated the New People of God's Law of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Christ told Nicodemus that the Mystery of the Coming of the Holy Spirit is like the mystery of the wind. You do not know where it came from, or where it is going. Yet, it is real. You feel and hear the wind. There is a quiet whisper of the Holy Spirit coming. (Easter Sunday evening The Risen Lord breathed on the Apostles and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.") There is also a powerful, strong coming of the Holy Spirit, (with the sound of mighty wind and tongues of fire.) John the Baptist said someone more powerful is coming after him-Who would baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit, His winnowing fork in hand, cleansing out His threshing floor. He will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire, and the wheat, He will gather into His granary.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the really new element in the Church. We, as the people of God of the New Covenant are no better than the people of the Old Covenant. We are just as fallen and wounded, stiff-necked and hard of hearing and seeing, as the Jewish people of the Old Testament, ever were. That is why the Heavenly Father sent His Only Son as Redeemer and Savior-we cannot do it alone. In His farewell discourse Our Lord promised that He would not leave the disciples as orphans. He would ask the Father to give them, and us, another Paraclete to be with us and in us! The Spirit of Truth. When the Paraclete comes, He would lead them and us into all the truth, bringing to mind all that Jesus had taught. The Holy Spirit would bear witness to Christ and strengthen us to bear witness to others. The Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, justice and judgment. Of sin, because they have not believed in the Son of God. Of justice, because He is returning to the Father. Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is already cast out.

St. Paul would say that no one can say "Jesus is Lord", except in the Holy Spirit. The Love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who has been given to us. We do not know how to pray, but the Spirit dwelling within us cries out in our hearts, "Abba-Father", with unutterable words.

In our own day, we have seen the holiness of Padre Pio, Mother Theresa, and Pope John Paul II. However, we have also seen the scandal of Catholic priests sexually abusing minors, and of Bishops covering up their criminal behavior. The Son of God is still at work cleansing His threshing floor with the fire of the Holy Spirit, burning the chaff with unquenchable fire, and

the gathering the wheat into His granary. It is only the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which has enabled the Church to weather the inner and outer storms of evil, which have beaten against her for 2000 years.

As for prayer, our Father St. Aelred of Rievaulx says that Christ is not glorified in our hearts until the Holy Spirit comes. God rested in contemplation on the seventh day, as the work of Creation was completed. All of creation seeks rest on the natural level. In the spiritual life-in our own work of conversion-we enter first into rest with oneself, by works of true love for self, uprooting inner weeds and planting good seeds. Then we enter into rest with our neighbor by works of true love for our brothers and sisters, for strangers, and for enemies. Finally, we enter into the rest of contemplative prayer through works of true love of God. When the Holy Spirit reveals the glory of God shining on the face of Christ within us, we rest in His divine presence.

Let us ask God the Father and the Son to send their Holy Spirit more fully into our world, so clouded in darkness, and into Holy Mother Church in her ongoing mission of bringing Christ and His Gospel to all peoples, and into our community as we move forward to discern and fulfill God's plan for us. Finally, let us pray for Bro. Boniface, who celebrated his birthday, this year, on the Feast of Pentecost, as he accompanies Bro. Dominic in the nursing home, on Dominic's Final Journey into the Eternal Rest of God.

In the Sacred Heart

Fr Cyprian, Abbot