

Dear Associates and Friends,

The Lord be with you.

It has been quite a month. Only now, have things slowed down enough for our September newsletter.

My brother, Larry and his wife, Barbara (a Lutheran minister, who fills in at times of need at an Episcopal or Methodist church) came early to celebrate his oldest brother's 80th birthday. Larry is the Catholic Bishop's MC for the eastern half of Idaho, as well as liturgy director at his own parish in Idaho Falls. He has given talks at a number of Idaho churches on the changes in the New Roman Missal, which come into effect the First Sunday of Advent, next year. We persuaded him to give our monks a couple of conferences as a long-term preparation.

Also, Barbara is working with Lutheran parishes on Bowen's Family Systems Theory as it is lived out in a church community. So I persuaded her to speak to our community on the dynamics involved, when a new husband and wife come together-each with a different, long and deeply rooted personal family formation-to form their own family. This, of course is the same process we experience and work through in our own monastic community (both old-timers living together and new members just entering).

All it cost us was free room and board for Larry and Barb.

Dom Brendan had agreed to direct our annual retreat the usual last week of January. Something else came up, so he asked about giving his conferences in mid-September instead. Our retreat was not quite as recollected, since we were still baking fruitcakes. What he gave us was a very nourishing blend of monastic teaching seasoned with his personal experiences as a novice, a junior, a professed priest, and 25 years as abbot. The frosting on the cake was an autographed copy of his book recently published in our Cistercian Wisdom series. Now we can ruminate his spiritual teaching at leisure, while the book *Come and See* is read during our noon meals.

The two-day Alumni Reunion celebration for our 60th Anniversary came right after the retreat. About twenty people assembled from as far away as Oklahoma, ?? St. Louis, New Jersey and New York. Dom Brendan was main celebrant the first day and our Bishop, James Johnston presided the next day. The Mass was followed by a tour of our monastery and bakery. A catered lunch enabled all the alumni (and spouses) to mingle and talk with our monks and staff. Then we settled down in the guesthouse parlor to share memories of our past monastic days.

That was quite a vigorous give and take. The second day was pretty much the same schedule. The topic for afternoon sharing was whatever anyone would like to tell about his life after leaving the abbey. Here again, human nature and grace mixed to produce unexpected and good fruit. The idea kept surfacing both days that the former member had received something from his longer or shorter life in our community, which lasted or benefited him ever since; not to overlook some less agreeable experiences from the good old, bad old days.

We wanted to express and show our awareness and gratitude for the contribution our alumni made to help us become who and what we are today. The celebration included our Nazareth Hermitage and Franciscan Prayer Friary neighbors also.

---

Dorothy Nash

A few weeks after Dorothy's death, on August 26, her family gathered here to share in offering Our Lord's Holy Sacrifice for her eternal happiness.

Years ago, I was waiting at night in the old Trailways bus station in the center of Springfield. It was a sweltering summer night. I noticed a man slumped in a seat, looking out into the blackness. A little boy sitting beside him asked, "Where is home?" He made no reply. Traditionally, the husband/father was the breadwinner and the wife/mother the homemaker.

Over forty years ago, Dorothy Nash came to our original abbey's guesthouse—a collection of a little old frame house with army surplus barracks on each side. She brought along some of her six young children. Dorothy was faced with the challenge of being both breadwinner and homemaker for them. She began by rooting herself at home in Holy Mother, the church, and Assumption Abbey, with the encouragement of monks like Frs. David and Odo, and Frs. Theodore and Richard.

As the years went by Dorothy kept in touch by phone, letters and returning here occasionally. We would get news about her work at the medical center and her singing in a nightclub. (Though the last may be a rumor cooked up by Bro. Boniface in his kitchen.) She did sing with USO events for soldiers during WWII.

We heard news about Kim's music and teaching; about Kris's Military Police and St. Louis Police Department work; when Kevin returned home after his service, Dorothy said proudly, "He looks like a lumber-jack" or was it Duff?

When retirement time came, "Big D" as family and friends called her, was a little boredâ€¦ the nest was empty. She decided to join the Peace Corps in her 70's, where her bread-winning and homemaking skills could flourish. She was sent to Senegal, a small country on the Atlantic coast of Africa. In a short time, she rallied her villagers (and some donors) to build a small maternity clinic, and trained native women to function as better mid-wives, besides other community building projects.

Dorothy bought a little house on the ocean shore and returned to Senegal yearly into her 80's. She and the people of Senegal had bonded. She had found a home in the Church, and in the monastery, and she made a home for her children in St. Louis. She finally extended her home to the people of Senegal.

Today's first Reading from Isaiah tells us that the Lord God will make a home for all peoples on His Holy Mountain. They will say, "Behold, here is our God, we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

The Responsory Psalm sings, "I rejoiced when I heard them say, ' Let us go to the House of the Lord."

In the Gospel Our Lord speaks of our eternal home, "Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house there are many roomsâ€¦ I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also."

At this Mass of the Resurrection our hearts are sorrowful, because Dorothy has gone away; but if we love her, we rejoice because our Lord Jesus has returned and brought her to Himself in His Father's house-and we have a deeper bond than ever with Big D in Christ's Sacrifice and Holy Communion of the Eucharist.

In the Sacred Heart,

Fr Cyprian