

Dear Associates and Friends,
The Lord be with you.

This has been a time of journeys—some long distances and some a little shorter. Fr. Robert headed to the Arizona desert to serve for two months as chaplain for our Trappistine nuns at Santa Rita Abbey. In addition to his spiritual ministry, Fr. Robert helps sort through newly made altar hosts, culling out any broken ones. The nuns support themselves by their altar bread industry. Much of the year they have no resident chaplain. They attend Mass at the local Catholic church and bring home consecrated Hosts for Communion services during the weekdays.

That same evening Bro. Thomas traveled to the emergency room at Mercy Hospital in Springfield. He had fallen and landed hard on his right hip. The x-rays showed a broken femur. The next afternoon after surgery, the doctor explained that the top knob of that bone had been compacted onto itself. So a simple procedure, inserting two screws through the bone into that knob, did the repair. After a couple days in the hospital, Bro. Thomas shared Fr. Donald's room at the Ava nursing home. He graduated from the wheel chair, to the walker, and is now home doing his own physical therapy to get back to his work in the garage.

Fr. Alberic drove with Fr. Thaddeus as companion to New Melleray. This was Fr. Thaddeus' first visit to our mother house. They stayed two nights at Our Lady of the Mississippi monastery, which is a dozen miles away. This gave our Vietnamese monk the opportunity to experience both a Trappistine community of nuns, and then the monks of New Melleray. The occasion was an abbatial election at our mother house. Dom Mark Scott had been temporary superior for 18 months and now it was time to choose their abbot. The community elected him for a six year term. Dom Mark knows us well, having been our abbot previously, before serving a number of years as editor of the Cistercian Studies Quarterly and of Cistercian Publications.

The next trip went first to a dentist's office and next to the Mercy emergency room (again). Bro. Francis broke a tooth. It needed to be pulled, but had three deep roots. This involved some exertion on the dentist's part, wrestling with Francis' hard jawbone. Following doctor's orders, Bro. Francis kept a teabag clenched up against the empty tooth socket. By evening it still had not stopped bleeding, and Francis was experiencing pain and dizziness. The ER staff determined that he had not lost enough blood to need a transfusion. The wound had formed a soft yet stable blood clot, so home sweet home and a gradual healing.

Fr. Paul has had two plastic tubs prove inadequate as fish ponds in our quadrangle. Groundwater collected under each in succession, to the point of pushing them out of place. He and Fr. Peter determined that now they would do the job right. Excavation began, and then pouring a concrete bottom, then building a cross-shaped structure of cement blocks filled with concrete. This rises a foot above ground level and should guarantee that fishpond number 3 will not float away. The next step is to cover the cross-shaped pond with a tough water-proof coating inside and out, before filling it with water. Since the goldfish could not stand by during all that, they released the fish into Bryant Creek.

LIKE SON, LIKE MOTHER

The liturgical changes after Vatican II involved a couple of mother/son combinations. St. Monica was moved from May 4th to August 27th, so that her memorial was one day before St. Augustine's. Also the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was moved from August 22nd to the day after the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

By celebrating the hearts of Jesus and Mary side by side, Holy Mother Church is following the example given by the Miraculous Medal in the 1800's. The face of the medal has Our Lady standing with outstretched hands encircled by the inscription, "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee." The back of the medal has two hearts side by side. Both hearts are aflame. One has a crown of thorns and is pierced by an open wound. The other heart has a crown of roses and a sword is passing through it.

Placing the Sacred Heart of the Son and the Immaculate Heart of the Mother side by side on the Miraculous Medal and in the liturgy expresses two things. The first of course, is the close personal relationship between Jesus and Mary—the bond of love uniting them. The Son receives His human life and body through His mother, but the mother receives her share in adopted Divine Life and her fullness of grace through her Son. The second thing, which the two hearts side by side symbolize, is the working covenant partnership of Jesus and Mary.

The virgin mother fulfilled the covenant vocation of Israel in her own personal life by responding faithfully to God's call and bringing forth the Messiah from her womb. Our Lord Jesus chose to live out His earthly vocation of preaching the Good News of salvation, and of offering His redeeming sacrifice, with His mother at His side—the New Adam and the New Eve.

The close personal relationship, the bond of love between Son and mother reached completion at the assumption of Mary in her glorified body and soul into the eternal arms of her Son. But their working covenant partnership continues in heaven and on earth.

The son sent His mother to give the Miraculous Medal to the Church militant in the early 1800's through Catherine Laboure. He sent His mother again to Bernadette with the message, "I am the Immaculate Conception," with the request for prayer and penance for the conversion of poor sinners—just a few years after Pope Pius IX defined Mary's Immaculate Conception as a dogma of faith. Then again in 1917 the Son sent His mother to three little children at Fatima with the urgent message of prayer and penance to prevent the errors of atheistic communism from spreading terrible wars over the world, yet promising that in the end her Immaculate Heart would triumph and a period of peace be given to the world.

Let us ask the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart that we might have a share, both in their close covenant love and union of friendship, and also in their ongoing practical covenant partnership, working together for the salvation of souls and for world peace.

In the Sacred Heart,
Your monks of Ava