

News Letter

Dear Associates and Friends,

The Lord be with you!

A fuller share of the shadow side of Christ's Paschal Mystery has come into our life recently. Steve Gear had moved from St. Louis to Ava only several weeks before with his wife Agnes and daughter Rose. He was preparing to become a Family Brother with us. He and Agnes were enjoying a day at our Bryant Creek low water bridge. Steve was wading at a bend in the stream, where the current becomes turbulent among rocks. The gravel bed went out from under his feet, and he floundered calling for help. His wife saw him look up with an intent gaze and fall forward on his face into the stream with his arms outstretched. The current carried him downstream. When help arrived, they were unable to revive Steve. He seems to have had a heart attack from that fateful struggle.

Agnes had Steve buried in a local cemetery. A number of our monks, Family Brothers and guests shared in his funeral ceremony.

Agnes has decided to continue living in Ava where Rose is employed as a pain management massage specialist. Steve was going more fully into a contemplative form of the Jesus Prayer. Agnes feels that our Lord heard and came to him as Steve cried for help.

A couple of weeks later our yard man and mechanic Elmer suffered a stroke. His right side is weakened and he has some difficulty formulating his thoughts into speech. He spent overnight in the hospital then was released. He will work with therapists. Elmer drove to and from the hospital. Time will tell how fully he can recover. His wife and two grandchildren are dependent on him, so he is determined to come back.

Of course we all keep Steve and Elmer and their families in our prayers, asking that God grant them a more full share in the glory side of Christ's Paschal Mystery as the fruit of sharing more in His Cross.

Fr. Paul constructed a neat little roof above the big bell, which is placed on ground level at a corner of our church. A cast iron collar atop the bell kept rusting and staining the bell. The roof is supposed to correct that situation.

The garden flourished with all the rain we've had this spring and summer. However, the raccoons discovered the garden, outmaneuvered the fence, and shared in some of the sweet corn and cantaloupe.

On St. Bernard's solemnity, August 20th, Fr. Robert celebrated his 90th birthday, and Br. Boniface celebrated his 60th anniversary of solemn vows. Sister Mariam of Nazareth Hermitage celebrated the 70th anniversary of her religious vows on August 15th, solemnity of our Lady's Assumption into Heaven. Ad Multos Annos. Our Fathers Thaddeus and Basil and Br. Roberto took part in the Marian Days ceremonies at Carthage, Missouri the weekend before the feast of the Assumption.

#### THE NEW PASSOVER

For 1,000 years God urged His people through the prophets to be holy as He is holy—to keep holy the Sabbath Day as a day of peaceful rest and joyful worship in honor of God resting on the seventh day after all His work of creation, and in honor of the rest which God gave His people by redeeming them from slavery in Egypt.

But when the Son of God comes as Son of Man He seems to be going about the Promised Land breaking the Sabbath.

The book of Exodus describes the sacrifice, which the people of Israel offered in preparation for God delivering them from the death of the first-born to be inflicted on all Egypt. Each family chose a lamb, sacrificed it at twilight, sprinkled its blood on their doorposts, then roasted and consumed it with unleavened bread. They were dressed for travel, ready for the desert journey from slavery to the Promised Land. The people were to observe this ritual as a yearly memorial feast celebrating the Passover of the Lord by a pilgrimage to the House of God.

In the fullness of time God sent His Son as the Lamb of God to accomplish the mystery and work of the New Passover. The New Passover Lamb was to be sacrificed in the context of Israel's feast of Passover. His blood was poured out, flowing from His side for the forgiveness of sins, to deliver all who would believe in Him from slavery to evil, from eternal death. His people would eat the flesh and drink the blood of the new Paschal Lamb, which He gave as a perpetual memorial to be observed not once a year but every day. He commanded His apostles to do this in memory of Him.

Every day we celebrate the feast of the New Passover, in which Christ, the New Paschal Lamb and High Priest, renews His redeeming sacrifice to the Father in union with us, the members of His Body. In the Eucharist we renew our covenant union with God in His beloved Son, who promises eternal life to those who eat His flesh and drink His blood.

In the Sacred Heart,

Your Ava Monks