



Queen of Peace Monastery



First Profession
Sr. Marie Étienne
of the
Most Holy Name of Jesus
Assumption of Mary
August 15, 2020

Vestition
Sr. Imelda Marie
of the
Resurrection
Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 14, 2020

First Profession
Sr. Diana Marie
of the
Divine Mercy
Queenship of Mary
August 22, 2020





Dear friends,

We wish you all a blessed Advent and a very merry Christmas! As we approach the end of a rather unexpected 2020, the words of the apostle Peter come to mind: *“always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have”* (1 Pet 3:15). Advent reminds us that our hope is born, not of a passing emotion or anything we can see, but in a stable, just shy of the darkest night of the year. The promise of Christmas is that Jesus is *“Emmanuel, God-with-us;”* and that no matter the vulnerability and uncertainty of our human condition and our present times, nothing in heaven or on earth will be able to *“separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Rm 8:39). His love is our hope; and with the shepherds and the Magi, we adore him.

Signs of this hope, like the star of Bethlehem, have accompanied us these last few months. As you saw on the cover, despite the challenges of the global pandemic and our local wildfire in the spring, three young women have asked to enter more deeply into our monastic life by their professions and vestition. We thank God for the gift of their vocations, and wish them every joy in the Lord.

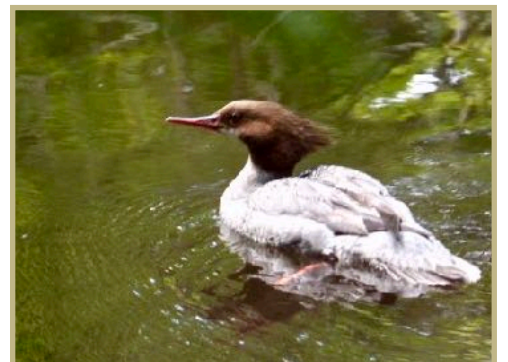
After the wildfire in the spring, we realized that we needed to improve our monastery’s fire protection, but were not sure how this would be possible. Thanks to the generosity of a beloved lay Dominican benefactor, by the end of the summer we were able to purchase a water pump for fighting fires, and enough other equipment to adequately protect our monastery and guest house. And although the pandemic meant that we were sadly unable to welcome the friars and guests who had planned to visit this summer, our property has still been blessed by guests of the four-foot and two-winged variety! Bears were scarce throughout the summer, but we were happy to “welcome” families of beavers, chipmunks, great blue herons, ducks, deer and a solitary (camera-shy) bobcat. Our valley is part of a seasonal visitation ground for bald eagles, and as this newsletter goes to print, we are looking forward to their arrival.

We are very blessed to have fr. Pierre LeBlond O.P continuing as our chaplain for the next year, giving us stability in the sacraments which so many of our brothers and sisters currently go without. He is residing in our guesthouse which, along with our gift shop, remains closed due to the pandemic. During this time that is financially difficult for so many, we also find ourselves in an unexpected position. We are working on developing an online gift shop, which we hope to launch in the next few months, and offer our heartfelt thanks to those friends who are still able to support our life of prayer through donations.

As we continue in the present uncertainty, it is a daily reminder to us that, like Jesus, we come from God and are returning to God (Jn 13:3). He is our certainty, our hope, our joy and our peace. We deeply appreciate your friendship and support, and continue to remember you in our prayers.

We wish you all a blessed Advent, and a very merry Christmas.

Blessings,
your sisters at Queen of Peace Monastery





Chronicles of Queen of Peace



July: It rained on Canada Day, but nothing would dampen our consensus that this was still a “pretty good reason to celebrate, eh?” The picnic moved to the community room, which was resplendent with red and white decorations, a display of Canadian art and literature, and even homemade ice cream and beavertail pastries.

A strange sight soon appeared in front of the guest house—a metre-deep trench! Designed to house the electrical cable connecting the hydroelectric generator to the monastery proper, the trench also marooned our chaplain, fr. Pierre Leblond OP, in the guesthouse. Our workman, Ron, quickly noticed the problem and built a temporary bridge to allow fr. Pierre to cross back and forth safely. When the big day arrived, sisters and volunteers suited up for some physically-distanced cable laying. Working in teams connected by walkie-talkies, we pulled the end of the heavy cable across the bridge, through the trench, up the hill by the library, and around the front of the building to the best access point to the electrical room.



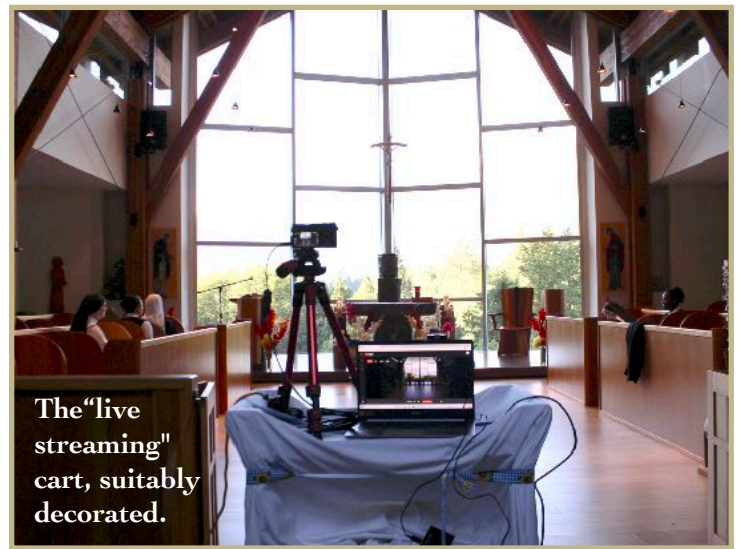
Cookie break after the cable pulling.

Around this time, the (bright blue) turbine for the project also arrived. Most remarkable, however, was the exceptional dedication to the project of Ron, our leading volunteer-engineers Peter and John, and countless others. Many and heartfelt thanks to all. And because energy doesn't come without fuel, Sr. Mary Magdalen worked hard all summer to provide sandwiches and homemade cookies for volunteers (sister workers enjoyed the cookies too!).

We slowly began to welcome back a few of our regulars to Mass, while taking the appropriate safety precautions. We also began to receive vocation enquirers again. By the end of July, the rain had decreased and we were able to enjoy a harvest from the garden—the first crop of our Queen of Peas, Sr. Diana Marie. Shucking the peas at recreation proved to be amusing as the green pearls escaped under chairs, over knitting projects and across the community room floor!

August: For eight days prior to St. Dominic's feast, we began Compline with a procession to the chapel whilst singing a litany in his honour. In artwork, St. Dominic is often depicted holding a lily—and so we saw his hand at work when Sr. Isabelle's lily patch produced a surprise of beautiful long-stemmed lilies just in time for the feast. We were unable to welcome our local Dominican laity chapter *Mysteria Lucis* to celebrate the day as we usually would, but we prayed in a particular way for all the Dominican family both near and far, keeping in our hearts and prayers the updates we've received on the spread of the virus.

On August 11, we celebrated the feast of our prioress, Sr. Claire Marie. The day was festive, with a picnic, a special song by the novitiate (a setting of “Our Father” by fr. André Gouzes, O.P.), and other little signs of gratitude and care for her service to us all. In mid-August, Sr. Marie Étienne and Sr. Diana Marie began their respective pre-profession retreats. Unknown to them, their extra prayers were sorely needed, as our plan of livestreaming the Masses of profession turned out to be more of a strenuous



The “live streaming” cart, suitably decorated.

hike than a walk in the park. The night before the first ceremony, everything was ready—and then the internet stopped working until a minute before the Mass! After some fervent intercession (and rapid feet), the system was re-set and we were able to share the joy of the day with family and friends unable to attend in-person due to the pandemic. The next week, the broadcast went without a hitch, much to the relief of the coordinating sister! Congratulations to Sr. Marie Étienne and Sr. Diana Marie, who will now begin their theological studies and assume further responsibilities within the community.

In the midst of all this, we officially opened our Youtube channel, where you can listen to recordings of our liturgical music (simply search “Queen of Peace” on the site). Sr. Mary Magdalen and Sr. Marie Étienne finished a visual catalogue of our all-natural glazes for pottery, and Sonia profited from the garden to collect dahlia and gladiola petals for the candle workshop.

September: On September 2, Mr. Roach of A.S. Roach Fire Protection Services drove out from Alberta to help us get our firefighting supplies up to scratch. Sr. Claire and Sr. Marie Thomas reconfigured the roof sprinklers, fine-tuned the hoses and learned to work our new wildfire pump. On September 3, Fr. Andrew L'Heureux of Whistler came for a workday to help us "Fire Smart" the forest closest to the monastery building. An arborist prior to his ordination, Fr. Andrew thinned dangerous trees with his chainsaw while sisters hauled on the directing rope to

On the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14), Denise received the habit and the religious name Sr. Imelda Marie of the Resurrection. She joyfully begins her novitiate, which will last two years.

In the chapel garden, Sr. Mary Columba began to find mysterious piles of Black-eyed Susan petals. The culprit was soon found: our resident chip "monks" have been climbing the flower stems, gnawing off the petals, and saving the seeds for winter. Sr. Mary Regina continues in



help the tree land safely (*above right*). Other sisters cleared the forest floor of deadwood and ladder fuel. While it was nerve wracking at first to see our beloved forest changing, the finished effect is quite elegant and we dubbed the new glade by the library "Queen of Peace Park." All that is missing is a (nonflammable) statue of Our Lady to make the work complete!

the sewing room and, when not collaborating on habits, is sewing custom designed aprons for the community. Sr. Jean Marie finished teaching an eight-month course in the novitiate about the history of the Order of Preachers.

Down below, the orchard produced a bumper crop of pears, apples and plums. While some of the garden provided food for deer rather than sisters (they seem particularly fond of Swiss chard, beets and gladiolas), the refectory was bountifully supplied with lettuce, zucchini, kale and other goodies from both the sisters' garden and from our tenant farmer Stefan.

The month ended with another "Fire Smart" work day, with the ground clearing proceeding north-east along the novitiate hill. As we sort the debris we've collected, we are finding that much of it will make very good firewood—and we are happy that it be in the "fitting" location of our fireplace rather than in the forest!

October: Between the feast of the Archangels and the memorial of the Guardian Angels, we received an angel in





disguise in the form of Gianetta Baril, a professional harpist from Calgary. Shortly after the pandemic began, she saw the stress and fatigue of health care workers and those in isolation. In early September, she packed her “rolling tiny home/teaching studio/performance hall” van with a pedal harp (and cat) and set off on a seven-week tour to bring joy and peace to others by sharing her gift of music. Having heard of our community from her aunt Sr. Gilberte, who is Dominican Missionary Adorer, she asked if she could stop by for a few days. Along with the gift of her sunny and compassionate personality, we were treated to two physically-distanced concerts of exquisite harp music ranging in style from improvisations on Gregorian chant to more contemporary pieces (did you know that a harp can also be a percussion instrument?). It was a joy to welcome Gianetta, and we continue to pray for her ministry.

From October 4 - 6, we responded to the Master of the Order’s call to celebrate a “triduum of penance” for all those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We offered Mass and prayed in a particular way for all those who are suffering; and each day closed by a procession to Compline while singing the Litany of Loretto. On October 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, we joined the rest of the Dominican Family worldwide in praying a rosary at 8 p.m. local time for the repose of all those who have died, for their families and loved ones, and for all those who are still suffering from the effects of the pandemic.

From October 9 - 11, the Seminary of Christ the King “bubble” approached the Queen of Peace monastery “bubble” with the arrival of Fr. Peter, Fr. Leo and Br Bartholomew OSB, and 34 high-

school seminarians. The seminarians camped out in our conference room for two nights; prayed with us at the Office; helped us to move a barn full of firewood indoors; sawed, chopped and moved more firewood; and continued to “Fire Smart” the forest. We tried to bake enough cookies and mac’n’cheese that there would be leftovers—and were joyfully defeated.

On October 15, we reached a milestone in the hydroelectric project with the installation of our turbine in St. Anne’s (our name for the power building). At 8:00 a.m., most of the community walked down to watch Peter, John,



Ron and a crane truck lift the turbine into place—a process which had to be exact, down to the millimetre. “Were you expecting us?” we asked the crane driver. Apparently, construction projects don’t usually include this many nuns as spectators! After the big lift, when all the bolts were tightly fastened, the turbine was blessed and we sang a song of thanksgiving. We’re looking forward to the completion of the project in the next few months.



Celebrating Thanksgiving.



From the desk of: Sister Elizabeth, O.P.

*“He has made known to us the mystery of his will,
according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ,
as a plan for the fullness of time,
to gather up all things in him,
things in heaven and things on earth.” - Ephesians 1:9-10*

You may have read, or at least heard, about Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, in which he gives us a striking word picture: Earth as our common home. But, did you know that we, with the rest of the entire created universe, not only have a common home but a common purpose? A shared vocation? A mutual calling?

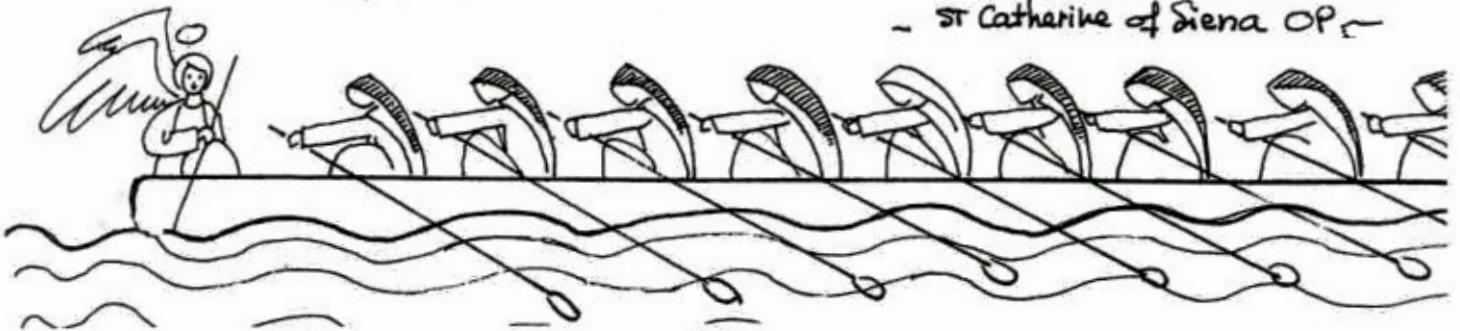
In the first chapter of the Letter to the Ephesians, the word *mystery* is used to describe salvation in Christ as something that involves not just human beings but the entire cosmos. As the Letter expresses it, before anything came into existence, God intended for humans and the whole of creation to be united in Christ, sharing in the divine life and love of the Trinity. And so, it is in this sense that you and I, along with hummingbirds, quarks, grizzly bears and hydrogen, all have the same vocation or calling in Christ. For humans, this call invites us to co-create with God a universe filled with healing, peace, justice and beauty. We are meant to be part of this cosmic movement that culminates in the promised re-creation of everything in a new heaven and a new earth.

This unifying process, or "one-ing," as the medieval English contemplative Julian of Norwich puts it, is also known by another name, a very ancient term that stretches way back in our Christian tradition to the Greek cultural context of the early church: *theosis*. This word simply refers to what salvation is both doing to us and enabling us to do, starting here and now, in the context of a grace-filled physical universe in which the Spirit is ever-present and lovingly at work. In the Word-made-flesh, now risen and glorified, God's eternal intention for this on-going transformation of all things in Christ is forever en-fleshed and intertwined with all flesh or created matter, thus making and enabling us, by grace, to be partakers of divine nature.

~ "From Hummingbirds to Hydrogen: the word 'mystery' in Ephesians 1:9-10"

During the fall rains, we sometimes think of building a boat, but then remember that we are already in a very good one...

*"...The Holy Spirit made the way of religious life and set it there like a ship
ready to receive souls who want to race on to perfection of charity ..."
- St Catherine of Siena OP*



Canadian friends :
who wish to contribute can receive
Income Tax receipts by sending your cheques to:
Queen of Peace Monastery
Box 1745
Garibaldi Highlands, B.C.
V0N 1T0 CANADA
Cheque Memo: **Queen of Peace Monastery**



American friends :
who wish to give over \$200.00 can receive Income
Tax receipts by sending your cheques to:
Blessed Sacrament Monastery
29575 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-2311 USA
Cheque Memo: **Queen of Peace Monastery**