



*“The light
shines...”*

+ Jn 1:5



Queen of Peace Monastery



Dear friends,

During Advent it is so good to sit in the evening candle light and simply draw near to the Lord with our Blessed Mother. There, we wait expectantly for the promise to be fulfilled; this promised gift of Love poured out upon our world. The Word is being made flesh so as to dwell amongst us and in us.

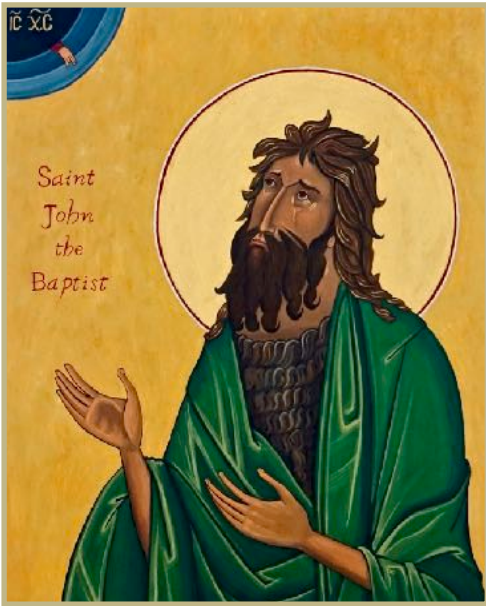
Silence is often the only appropriate response to love. There is something holy about it. It is not an emptiness, but rather, a plenitude. Silence is not the absence of noise but rather a disposition of attentiveness, a listening, a being present to a Presence. Like the painting of Mary on the cover, our ears and hearts are open to receive.

This 'pregnant' silence is at the heart of the contemplative life (to which we are all called) and needs to be protected from what constantly threatens to annihilate it. At Queen of Peace we structure our lifestyle and schedule to cultivate silence. We intentionally have times of profound silence when we agree not to speak or communicate or fill ourselves with information or busy - ness. The discipline of silence constructs *an interior cell*, as St. Catherine of Siena would say, so that even in the midst of our activities, we may dwell with our Lord. Jesus calls us to dwell in His love, and live in communion with Him.

Advent is the liturgical season when we intentionally try to renew our practice of silence and abide in this precious dwelling place. It means quitting that which occupies (or preoccupies) us in order to rest in God, which is a huge act of trust. We let Him be God and receive His silence. His greatest works of love are done in silence.

The community of Queen of Peace wishes you and your loved ones a blessed Advent and Christmas. During this beautiful liturgical season, may we all be given the grace to enter into the dispositions of the heart of Mary as she prepared in silence and wonder the coming of our Saviour.

God bless,
your sisters at Queen of Peace Monastery.



June: At the end of our last newsletter, BC Hydro had inspected our micro-hydro electricity project, and we were waiting for the results. As the work moved from our property to a government desk, we could still see signs of the project's continued development. An occasional flickering light, a workman arriving in the kitchen to test the voltage, and a week of "singing" outflow pipes signalled that fine tuning was underway. Meanwhile, the sun shone, and Thomas Schneider of Nutrient Dense Farms hayed our fields for animal feed and compost material.



Our community is humbly grateful for the privilege of living in the ancestral territory of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation). Like many others in our country and around the globe, we were greatly saddened by the discovery of 215 children found buried at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. We offered our community's Eucharist on Corpus Christi (June 6) in remembrance of these children, their families and nations. We continue to pray and offer a weekly Mass for the individual and collective healing of our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

On June 24, the feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist, we joyfully welcomed Mariel to begin her postulancy (*above*). She joins us from the parish of Our Lady of the Mountains in Whistler, B.C.. After a simple ceremony in the Chapter Hall, she was greeted in the chapel by a new icon of John the Baptist who had joined us several hours previous (let's just say that her entrance provided sister painter with a deadline!).

Little did she, or anyone else, know what we were in for over the next few days. From June 25 - July 1, the Pacific Northwest region was hit with a historic heatwave. According to our local weather monitoring station, the highest recorded temperature was 42.6° C (108.7° F); however, if we'd taken a reading during Vespers in our south-facing chapel, we think we could have beat that easily! With no air conditioning system, the situation rapidly became unbearable, and on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul we decamped to a temporary oratory in the basement for the Divine Office. Meanwhile, Sr. Marie Thomas participated in the first Zoom session of Monastic Theological Studies, a formation program run by the North American Association of Dominican Nuns. This session covered St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, and was taught by fr. Andrew Hofer, O.P.



July: The provincial government's pandemic restrictions on public worship lifted on July 1, and we rejoiced to once again be able to welcome guests to our liturgy. After almost eight months of collective solitude, it was marvellous to once again hear voices joining ours in prayer to God. July 10 marked a further easing of (self-imposed) restrictions as it was declared that the grocery delivery no longer needed

to be sanitized upon arrival, a measure we'd begun to further protect our most vulnerable sisters. This marked the end of a year and a half of highly-coordinated spraying, wiping, dunking and drying performed by our novitiate every Friday afternoon. If the Olympics had a soupcan-cleaning competition, we're pretty sure our young sisters would have a fighting chance!

Although the heat wave was hard on our nasturtiums, the rest of the garden rebounded with bumper crops of cherries, raspberries, broccoli and beans (and, notably, fewer horsetail weeds than usual). On July 17, Thomas and his wife Astrid offered us a workshop on compost. It is said that things in monastic life proceed at a slower pace than most of the modern world; and although our monastic compost will ferment at a relatively slow rate due to a prudent balance of nitrogen and carbon ingredients, we are relieved that it is unlikely to attract bears or to spontaneously combust! By the end of the afternoon, we had a well-balanced windrow (*right*) that should be ready to nourish our garden sometime around October.

Also in July, we were joined by our Dominican confrere from Ottawa, fr. Hervé Tremblay O.P., for a few weeks of retreat. An avid birdwatcher, fr. Hervé managed to spot over fifty species in our locale, and went up, down and around Cloudburst Mountain in search of the West Coast spruce grouse.

We knew that friends of the community had received our spring newsletters when the orders for our handmade soap began pouring in. To lend a hand to Sr. Imelda Marie and Mariel in the soap department, the whole community received a training in wrapping, labelling and boxing. It soon became an enjoyable recreation activity whenever extra help is needed.

August: As the major work on our hydro project wound down, our workman Ron and volunteers Peter and John had turned their attention to the next immediate need: improved fire protection for our main monastery buildings. Using leftover pipes from the hydro project, they re-routed, reinforced and greatly increased the water pressure to the rooftop sprinkler system a benefactor had generously purchased last year. On August 3, the adjustments were finished just as we heard news of a wildfire on the far side of Cloudburst Mountain, a few kilometers north of us. This was a good chance to test the system, and review the evacuation protocols we'd been practicing. We fell asleep that night under the paradox of cloudless skies and water dripping outside our cells as the sprinklers did their work. Over the next few days, it was a relief to hear that the fire was well-contained, and we continued to pray for the wildfire crews as our province endured one of the most destructive fire years on record.

What do you do when you purchase a catch of fresh salmon (legally caught), without realizing that they're not gutted? Roll up your sleeves, sharpen the knives, and bring out the buckets. On August 17, we spent evening recreation doing just that. Once each fish was cleaned, Sr. Marie Étienne and Sr. Mary Regina faithfully wrapped each one to freeze for the winter.



The solemnity of St. Dominic (August 8) marked the beginning of a week of festivities as our dear Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia from Vancouver joined us and our chaplain Br. Pierre Leblond O.P. for a celebratory meal and recreation. The next day, we enjoyed a long-overdue visit with Archbishop Michael Miller CSB. In both cases, it was a joy to see each other again after a long separation due to COVID. Just a few days later, we celebrated the feast day of our prioress Sr. Claire with a picnic, skits, songs, and an unmissable recital of *The Cremation of Sam McGee* courtesy of Sr. Mary Magdalen. Meanwhile, Sr. Marie Thomas participated in the second Zoom session of MTS, featuring St. Thomas Aquinas's Scriptural commentaries as taught by fr. Timothy Bellamah O.P. of the Leonine Commission.



At the end of the month, it had cooled down enough for the novitiate to hike to Butterfly Lake, about three hours up the mountain from our monastery. With good food, good fellowship, and a good amount of energy worked off, they returned home with stories of moss, mountains and long hills. For the record: it takes five novitiate sisters to encircle one old growth cedar (we'd share a picture, but we'd left the camera at home to simply enjoy the moment). One of this summer's aspirants joined us on the hike, and another arrived two weeks later.

Finally, on August 27, we received our long-awaited approval from BC Hydro to begin operating our micro-hydroelectricity project. After over ten years of applications, stream impact assessments, concrete-hauling and construction, it is a joy and a relief to finally receive this go-ahead. We began to plan an official blessing, scheduled for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi (see article, opposite).

September: As summer rolled into fall, the canning pot in the bakery began to simmer and bubble away as various sisters began to preserve the harvest. The pantry now

includes homemade currant jelly, tomato jam, apple butter, and pear compote. Meanwhile, the rhubarb is waiting patiently in the freezer until the novitiate has time to turn it into marmalade.

In mid-September, the fall rains arrived, enveloping our valley in a heavy blanket of cloud and water. When the clouds parted briefly, we glimpsed the first snow on the peak of Mount Tantalus. Shortly afterward, on September 19, we glimpsed another much-anticipated sign of autumn: the salmon run in Pilchuk Creek. Historically, this is the breeding habitat of chum, coho and pink salmon, who lay their eggs in the gravel beds. This year, we received a good run of Pink salmon. It has been almost six years since the last significant run, so it is very special to see their return.

From the 27th to October 1, Sr. Isabelle participated via Zoom in the novice mistress meeting of the North American Association of Dominican Nuns.



Blessing of Our Micro-Hydroelectricity System



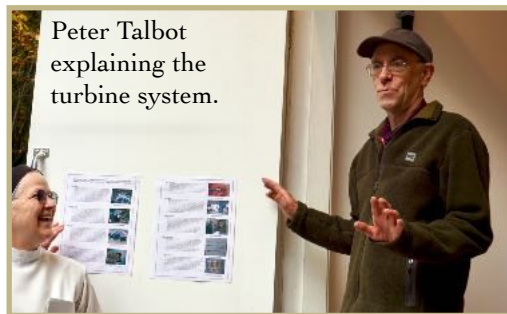
Opening hymn

After over a decade of careful preparations, applications and elbow grease, we celebrated the completion of our micro-hydroelectricity project with a blessing and open house on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi (October 4). Guests included friends, neighbours, benefactors and project leads extraordinaire Ron Wilson, Peter Talbot and John Powell. After an opening hymn, our vicar fr. Guy Rivard O.P. and Fr Andrew L'Heureux of Whistler blessed the facility. We offered a tour of the facility, including an explanation of the renewable energy produced and the steps taken during construction to mitigate the impact on the local environment. Those involved in the the project's construction fondly remembered (not without a few groans) adventures such as hauling heavy pipe up boulder fields with a chainsaw-powered winch; carrying 20kg bags of cement down a deer trail on their shoulders to avoid the use of heavy machinery in the forest; and, most arduous of all, the paperwork involved in all the applications and permits! Now that it is completed, this run-of-the river hydro system generates enough electricity to supply our monastery's energy needs for the majority of the year. During high water periods, the excess energy generated can be sold back to B.C. Hydro for an extra source of income; and during low water periods, the generator can be shut off to minimize the impact on Pilchuk Creek.

As a community, we are deeply grateful to all those who contributed to this project, whether financially, with work and expertise, or with encouragement and prayer. Thank-you for dreaming with us as we continue to build this "house of prayer for all peoples" (Is 56:7).



Sr. Mary Columba presses the start button.



Peter Talbot explaining the turbine system.



As our newest member, Mariel cut the ribbon.



The prayer of blessing.



Reviewing the construction process.

Celebrating St. Dominic: 800 Years

During the year 2021 we are celebrating an important Jubilee. It has been eight centuries since the death of St. Dominic, the founder of the Order of Preachers. We give thanks for all the graces bestowed upon the Church and the world throughout these 800 years. The Order has nurtured the vocations of Saints and Blesseds such as Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena, Fra Angelico, Martin de Porres, Rose of Lima, etc. The list is long and continues to grow. It appears that our Father Dominic has been faithful to the promise he made on his death bed to continue to accompany and help us.

For the occasion, the community of Queen of Peace has decided to brush up on (or learn) the ancient Gregorian chant "O spem miram" which has been sung throughout the centuries as the last chant of the day. *O spem miram quam dedisti mortis hora te flentibus, dum post mortem promisisti te profuturum fratribus. Imple, pater, quod dixisti nos tuis juvenis precibus. Qui tot signis claruisti in aegrorum corporibus nobis opem ferens Christi aegris medere moribus. Imple, pater, quod dixisti nos tuis juvenis precibus.* Translated, this means: "O Wonderful hope which you gave to those who wept for you at the hour of your death, promising after your departure to be helpful to your brethren. Fulfill, O Father, what you have said, and help us by your prayers"

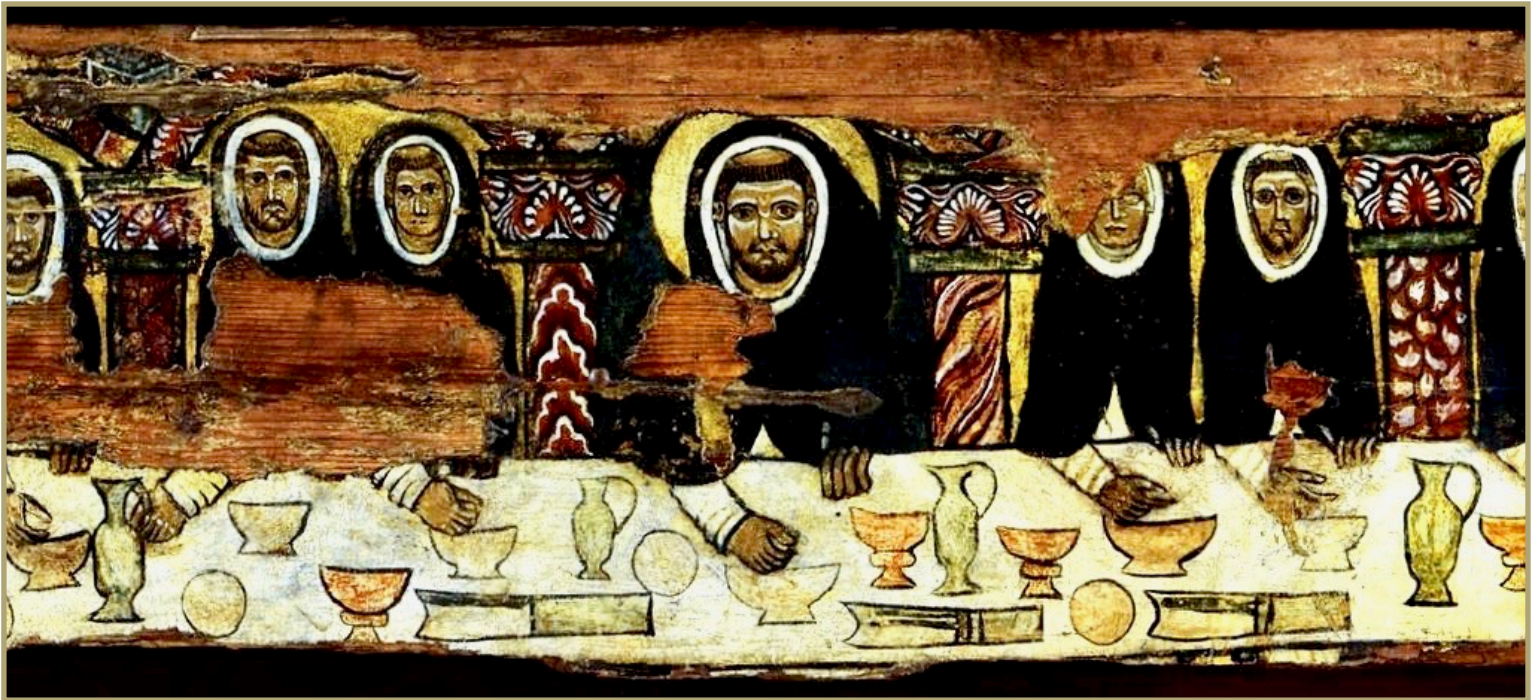
This Jubilee is an encouragement for the Order of Preachers to press forward towards the future. We will continue to embody our Dominican charism by listening and responding to the needs of the Church and our beloved

world. The Holy Spirit will guide us as we fly with the wings of compassion.

This is the heart of the Dominican charism. It was a heart full of compassion that compelled Dominic to sell all his books while he studied in Valencia so as to feed the poor during the famine. It was compassion that compelled him to stay up all night to listen to the Innkeeper who adhered to a heretical belief that the material world was evil and therefore the Word did not take flesh. As Dominic fed this Innkeeper with the Word he realized that the world needed an Order of Preachers of the Word. It was also compassion that compelled Dominic to begin a monastery for the female Cathars who were reconciled with Catholicism through his preaching. After conversion, these women found themselves suddenly alienated from their families and were truly poor; they would never have been accepted into other established monasteries without dowries. It was simply unheard of in medieval monasticism. By providing them with a specifically Catholic model of religious life, nourished by the Word of God and a rich liturgical and sacramental life, they would model the message. The monastery was called the Holy Preaching of Prouilhe and preceded the establishment of the Order with the Friars Preachers and Lay Dominicans.

May the Lord, through the intercession of Dominic, continue to bless you, the Church and the world through the Order of Preachers.

+ By Sr. Claire, O.P.



As an image of St. Dominic for this Jubilee year, the Order selected the "Mascarella Table," which was painted by an unknown artist in mid-13th century Italy. The first known image of St. Dominic, it shows him as a brother sharing a meal with his brethren and with us, the viewer. Each place setting includes a simple bowl, cup, piece of bread and—very Dominican—a book. The full painting includes 48 figures, and at one point measured 44cm by 5.76 meters. Some believe that the wooden panel is actually the refectory table St. Dominic ate at in Bologna, at which he miraculously multiplied loaves to feed the brothers when the convent ran short of food.

Queen of Peace Monastery Calendar

For the first time, our community is offering a Queen of Peace Monastery calendar. Our 2022 edition features the breathtaking natural beauty of our monastery's home in the Upper Squamish Valley. Professionally printed on 80lb paper, it includes dates for the major feasts and solemnities of the Church year, as well as civic holidays and memorials for British Columbia and Canada.

Each calendar costs \$25, and will be available for purchase through our online and physical gift shops around the beginning of Advent. Thank-you in advance for your support of our growing community. God bless your New Year!



Donation Information



Canadian friends

If you wish to receive an income tax receipt, please send your cheques to:

Queen of Peace Monastery
Box 1745
Garibaldi Highlands, B.C.
V0N 1T0 CANADA

Cheque Memo: Queen of Peace Monastery

American friends

If you wish to give over \$200.00, you can receive an income tax receipt by sending your cheques to:

Blessed Sacrament Monastery
29575 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-2311 USA
Cheque Memo: Queen of Peace Monastery

Please remember my intentions in your prayer: _____

Name: _____ Street: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

We assure you of our daily prayers for your family, friends and special intentions.