

Section One: Reading and Reflection

For the last three months we have been challenged by a concept in chapter 67: the undivided heart, or the monastic heart, or the heart united in its desire for God. We have pondered over what it means to live within the enclosure of the heart.

Thank you for the positive response so many of you have made to this challenge. It is very clear from the letters I have received that this is our deepest desire – to live with undivided hearts, hearts united in their desire for God.

I read a beautiful reflection recently. The author is unknown. I thought of it in the light of an undivided heart, and so I have added one line to it:

One song can spark a moment.
One flower can wake the dream
One tree can start a forest
One bird can herald Spring.
One handclasp lifts a soul
One word can frame the goal
One sunbeam lights a room
One step must start each journey
One touch can show you care
One voice can speak with wisdom
One heart can know what is true.
ONE MONASTIC HEART!
One heart given to God!
One life can make a difference.

This isn't the piece in its entirety. I have taken certain lines.

In prayer this time, I have been drawn again to ask us to ponder on one verse from the Prologue: "Let peace be your quest and aim." (Verse 17). Peace is something that flows from the heart of a real monastic person. Peace is something which flows from the "undivided heart".

In order to understand monastic peace, we need to know what destroys peace, or what is the opposite of peace.

A person who professes to be monastic, yet lives with a divided heart is surely one who is often agitated, over-preoccupied with worries and cares, is often interfering in other people's affairs, is restless, unable to be quiet and sit quietly. This kind of person is rarely seen in a quiet garden or on a seat in the garden. Rather, this kind of person is always on the go. This kind of person sits down to prayer and immediately remembers that there is still washing in the machine. It must be put out on the line NOW! This kind of person spends almost every day trying to keep on top of all areas so that nothing is ever out of hand. This kind of person is always telling you how much they want peace, but when it is all around them, they can't cope. It is too quiet, too peaceful.

St. Benedict says: "Let peace be your quest and aim."

Section Two: Further Reading and Reflection

Br. Hugh Feiss, in his book, “Monastic Wisdom”, says something we may not want to hear but which we need to hear: “Peace can only be achieved where conflict is honestly acknowledged. To acknowledge such conflict takes courage and humility and an uncommon readiness to forgive...genuine peace is not easily or painlessly achieved.” (Page 128). Perhaps this is why the real Benedictine motto is not PAX (PEACE) but rather, “Pax inter spinas”, (Peace through a crown of thorns). The peace which Christ won for us through his suffering and death is the model for us. We just can’t reach out and grab “peace”, like a supermarket commodity. Unfortunately! Too often, our motto is shortened to “Pax”. St. Benedict says: “Seek peace and pursue it.” There is activity in the seeking and the pursuing. It doesn’t come easily.

Brother Hugh Feiss quotes St. Bernard of Clairvaux, from his sermons on the “Song of Songs”: “What then will you give us, Lord? What are you going to give us?” “Peace I give you. My peace I leave for you,” says the Lord. That is enough for me: gratefully I accept what you leave, and I let go of what you retain. If it pleases you, I do not doubt that it is for my good...I want peace, I desire peace, and nothing more. If there is anyone unsatisfied with peace, they will be unsatisfied with you.

Section Three: About (Concerning) the Rule of St. Benedict.

Other texts on peace in our Rule are:

Peace as reconciliation in chapter 4, verse 73.

Peace as quiet mind in chapter 7, verse 35

Peace in community, chapter 34, verse 5.

Peace with guests in chapter 53:4.

The opposite of peace as expressed in anxiety in chapter 64:16.

As expressed in disturbances in chapter 63:2, 65:7, 48:5, 53:16, 31:19, 61:2, 31:1, 64:16, 48:1, 4:73, 65:2, 7, 8.

Then on a positive note again, there is monastic ritual in the public recitation of the Lord’s Prayer, 13:12 and 13.

And the Kiss of Peace in 53:5 and 63:4.

Work your way through these texts and you may find you create your own tapestry of Benedictine peace.

Most of all – take it to your heart.

Section Four: Community History

Sr. Stanislaus (Rose) Dwyer (anniversary Nov.. 9th) was born in New South Wales in 1841. She was the great-grand-daughter of Michael Dwyer, the Irish patriot transported to Australia for his part in the 1798 rebellion. His descendants prospered and gained extensive land-holdings in the Campbelltown area. Sr. Stanislaus entered our community on November 27th, 1868. She was clothed in the monastic habit on September 18th, 1872 and made profession on October 14th, 1877. She had an aunt in our community, Sr. Elizabeth Dwyer. Sr. Stanislaus’s profession was delayed because of ill health. She made profession on her death-bed. Ill-health at this time in our history was mostly caused by tuberculosis.

Section Five: Liturgy

September:

- 03: St. Gregory the Great (Feast).
- 08: Birthday of Our Lady (Feast).
- 13: St. John Chrysostom (Memorial)
- 14: TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS. Feast
- 15: Our Lady of Sorrows. Memorial
- 16: Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian. Memorial.
- 17: St. Hildegard of Bingen. Feast
- 21: St. Matthew. Feast
- 23: Padre Pio of Pietrelcina. Memorial.
- 24: Mercy Day (Sisters of Mercy)
- 27: St. Vincent de Paul
- 28: St. Lioba. Feast
- 29: Archangels. Feast
- 30: St. Jerome. Memorial.

October:

- 01: St. Therese of Lisieux: Feast
- 02: Guardian Angels. Memorial (not celebrated because it is also the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A).
- 03: Blessed Columba Marmion. Feast in Benedictine Houses. (Omitted this year because it is also the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time).
- 04: St. Francis of Assisi. Memorial. World Day for Pets. Animal Welfare Day.
- 06: St. Bruno. Memorial.
- 07: Our Lady of the Rosary.
- 10: English Missionary Bishops (from the time of Augustine of Canterbury): Memorial. (Omitted this year because it is also the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time).
- 12: St. Mechtild. Feast or Memorial in Benedictine communities.
- 15: St. Teresa of Avila – Memorial.
- 16: St. Hedwig, or St. Margaret Mary Alcoque. Optional Memorias. (Not celebrated because it is also the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A).
- 17: St. Ignatius of Antioch. Memorial (Omitted this year because it is also the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time).
- 18: St. Luke
- 28: Sts. Simon and Jude.

November:

- 01: All Saints. Solemnity
- 02: All Souls Day
- 05: Commemoration of the Deceased Relatives and Benefactors of our Community.
- 09: Dedication of the Lateran Basilica. Feast.
- 10: Pope St. Leo the Great. Feast.
- 11: St. Martin of Tours. Feast.
- 13: All Saints of the Order of St. Benedict. (Not celebrated because it is also the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A).
- 14: All souls of the Order of St. Benedict. (Omitted this year because it is also the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time).
- 16: St. Gertrud the Great. Feast.

- 17: St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Memorial
- 18: Dedication of the Basilicas of Sts. Peter and Paul. Optional Memorial.
- 21: Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the Annual Feast for all Presentation Sisters. It is also *Pro Orantibus Day*. This day was proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI on November 19, 2006, as the day dedicated to remembering cloistered religious.
- 21: SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING AND THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR.
- 22: St. Cecilia. (Memorial)
- 23: St. Columban. Optional Memorial
- 24: Andrew Dung Lac, martyr. Memorial.
- 27: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

Section Six: Your Community

Our prayers go to the Harders family. **Oblate Gabriele (Angelica) Harders** died on June 22nd. Gabriele was young, born in 1942. Her husband, oblate Henning (Maximilian Harders pre-deceased her on July 19th, 2009).

Sr. Janice Robertson died on June 9th, a few days before Pentecost. She had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer on Easter Sunday morning. While it was an unusual time to be diagnosed, her hospitalization coincided with Good Friday and Holy Saturday, and at that time of the year, it is difficult for doctors to operate because of the shortage of hospital staff on public holidays. Sr. Janice's funeral took place on June 14th. Her burial took place on June 20th. It was impossible for the grave diggers to work here on June 14th because of days and days of torrential rain. We couldn't even get a car to the cemetery here. Sr. Janice's family came from New Zealand, and her older sister Marilyn gave one of the eulogies at her funeral. It was a memorable event for our community. We are still struggling with the reality of it.

Sr. Janice was 67 years old.

Congratulations and Blessings to:

Dorothy Veronica Guiliani Touzell of Jamberoo who made her Oblation on June 6th. **Pam (Magdalen) Hassell** of Colbinabbin, Victoria, who made her Oblation on July 9th. Both women had serious and legitimate reasons for asking to make their oblation outside of the agreed time (the weekend in September). During the Oblate retreat from 23rd until 25th September, already six Candidates will make Oblation on Saturday September 24th. Please keep them in your prayer. All are earnest in their seeking of God.

Blessings on your Feast Day:

September:

- 01: Varcha (Giles) Sidwell, and Jill (Anna) Grienke
- 03: Lenka (Gregoria) Hill, and Donn (Gregory) Corcoran, Fr. Brian (Gregory) Mascord.
- 06: Wendy (Begu) Fisher-Hudson
- 14: John (of the Cross) Delaforce, and Sr. Veronica Chandler, Sonia (Veronica) Pleines.
- 17: Pam (Hildegard) Russell, Linda (Hildegard) Childs-van-Wijk, Patrick (Hildegard) O'Connor, Diane (Hildegard) Young, Beth (Hildegard) Muntz, Robyn (Hildegard) Wein, Mary (Hildegard) McCall, Elaine (Hildegard) Housen, Louise (Hildegard) McMahan, Sr. Hildegard Ryan.
- 28: Rosie (Lioba) Jenkins, Gerardine (Lioba) Healy, Beppi (Lioba) O'Connor, Kathy (Lioba) Mason, Elizabeth (Lioba) Anderson.
- 29: Sidney (Michael) Rice.

October:

- 01: Fiona (Therese) Harris, Libby (Therese) Denny, Sr. Therese Gilmour.
03: Sr. Naomie Ruth Varnakulasingham, Susan (Columba) Lambert.
04: Maxine (Francis) Pickering, Christine (Frances) Angus, Diane (Frances) Greenway
10: Sr. Mellitus Troy.
12: Elaine (Mechtild) Alinta, Carmel (Mechtild) Leighton, Sr. Mechtild Crawford.
15: Carmen (Teresa) Lorente, Robyn (Teresa) Wynen, Elizabeth (Teresa) Montgomery,
Maria (Teresa) Elisabetta Gambino, Beate (Teresa) Steller, Ewa Maria (Teresa) Komorovska.
16: Ruth (Hedwig) Huebner, Vincenzo (Gerrado) Cappetta.
25: Wilf (Ambrose) Moon, Ken (Ambrose) Halliday.

November:

- 16: Mother Mary Gertrud Barnes (Abbess), Ann (Gertrud) Anderson, Mary (Gertrud)
Connors, Joan (Gertrud) Dray, Irene (Gertrud) Bajda, Rita (Gertrud) Schembri, Joan
(Gertrud) Eldaher, Christine (Gertrud) Phillips, Nereda (Gertrud) Blake, Debi (Gertrud)
Russell, Toni (Gertrud) Jenkins, Laura (Gertrud) Moya, Maria Elena (Gertrude) Zaragoza,
Christine (Gertrud) Simons, Sr. Gertrud George.
21: Patricia (Mary) Atkins, Kathryn (Mary) Proctor.
22: Valerie (Mary Cecilia) Proverbs, Enid (Cecilia) Fleming.

Anniversaries of Oblation:

September:

- 03: Jean Edmond Peter Antoine, Maree Basel McGuckin.
08: Lyn Hilda Yates.
09: Helen Therese (no surname on the charter of commitment).
14: Fr. Andrew Aidan Doohan.
15: Maria Elena Gertrude Zaragoza, Antonia Bede Zaragoza, Doreen Rita Mary Soballa,
Monica Augustina Rodrigues, Geraldine Mary Benedicta Doyle.
16: Dean Bernard Godric Piryak.
22: Elaine Hildegard Housen, and Harry Gregory Housen.
26: John of the Cross Delaforce.
29: Chantal Mary Benedicte Jacquier.
30: Lindsay Samuel Alban Roe, and Vivien Teresa Hilda Arnold.

October:

- 05: Diane Frances Greenway
14: Louise Hildegard McMahan.
17: Rev. Dixon Serafim Kenney, Wendy Mary Kenney. Philip Benedict Ryan, Gudrun
Majella Muling, Paul Bernard Muling, Lilette Monica Louise, Helen Therese Subramanian
22: Janet Therese (of Lisieux) Clark
23: Beate Teresa Hildegard Steller.

November:

- 07: Vivienne Martha Chiswell.
09: Diane Hildegard Young
15: Alan Bede Hickey, Amanda Mary Hickey, Pamela Hildegard Russell, John Antony
Dunne, Irene Sutherland, Helena Frances O'Neill, Joan Gertrude Dray, Heather Bede
Gorman, Mary of the Annunciation Wyatt, Bill Benedict Price, Claire Catherine Devlyn,
Gerardine Lioba Healy, Ann Gertrud Anderson, Pamela Henry Herrick, Ira Peter Wilson,
Elke Scholastica O'Donnell, Tim Benedict O'Donnell, Elizabeth Frances Fahey, Rita

Romanus Gertrude Schembri, Linda Hildegard Childs-Van-Wijk, Jeff Boniface Smart, Margaret Hilda Watts, Denise Frances Hill, Ken Benedict Press Rosie Lioba Jenkins, Brian Robert Brennan, Patrick Benedict Sleight.

17: Colleen Julian Hines and Victoria Rose Sultana

21: Christine Gertrud Simons, Enid Cecilia Fleming, Patricia Benedict Thomas.

22: Catherine Anne Cecilia Milgate

23: Majorie Teresa Carroll.

24: Fiona Therese Harris

26: Therese Julian Proctor, Arnold Boniface Struzina.

SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING: Mary Elizabeth Locke.

Solemn Profession Anniversaries:

September:

14: Sr. Benedetta Cerato

October:

11: Sr. Elizabeth Funder

November:

03: Sr. Magdalen Mather

16: Mother Mary Gertud Barnes (Abbess).

Necrology:

September:

03: Sr. Mary Patricia Kelly.

07: Sr. Mary Chanel Pechy

12: Fr. Maurus O'Connell, who was chaplain for a short time from 1888, following upon the death of Fr. Bonaventure Curr. (chaplain from 1874-1888).

21: Sr. Fidelis Williams

24: Sr. Gertrude Hishon

26: Sr. Marie Therese Malone

27: Oblate Philip Francis Bruno Price

October:

08: Mother Mary Scholastica Gregory (one of two founding Mothers).

09: Sr. Mary Aloysius Carroll, Sr. Mary Scholastica O'Loughlin.

10: Sr. Dominic Fitzpatrick, Sr. Mary Magdalen Prown.

11: Mother Walburge Wallis (first elected Prioress- 1864).

13: Sr. Marie Vianney Loughnan

17: Fr. Bede Sumner. Fr. Bede lived at our monastery in the last years of his life. He freed our community from debt in 1864, and was therefore our most generous benefactor of the early decades of our history.

18: Oblate Aubrey Patrick Connors

19: Sr. Mary Joseph Dimond.

19: Sr. Placid Wilson

25: Sr. Mary Lucy Kirsch

26: Sr. Mary Patrick Emblem.

November:

09: Sr. Mary Stanislaus Dwyer.

- 21: Sr. Mary Francis Machlin.
23: Sr. Mary Veronica Hennessy
24: Sr. Mary Gabriel Enge
25: Sr. Mary Teresa Dimond.

Section Seven: Saints

This is not wisdom from the saints, but the word “saint” leaps out as a challenge. The excerpt is from the Presence Poems of Br. Xavier FMS, cited in the “Anthology of Australian Religious Poetry” edited by Les A. Murray, and published by Collins/Dove in 1986. The Presence poems are at the end of the book.

Presence XII

Presence, in calm moments
You keep reminding me
Of that one great promise –
Christ will never leave us orphans,
He will send the Holy Spirit. Yet I go searching book shelves
For paper boats to sail to heaven
Across the years, I chart a course
And navigate, I think shoals unaided,
To arrive among the harbour lights..
To be a saint without God...

We all make our paper boats to sail to heaven, and we all navigate our course, and we all try to do it “my way”.

Section Eight: For Reflection

Benedictinism simply sets out to gentle a universe riddled with violence by being a peaceful voice for peace in a world that thinks that everything...is accomplished by force.”
(Sr. Joan Chittister)