

TRANSFIGURATION
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The View

NEWSLETTER

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One of my favorite times is very early morning, shortly after I awake, when I sit in my 'cell' (monastic term for my room) and watch the clouds go by. At this time of year it's usually still pitch dark. When the sky is clear, and the moon is full, or nearly so, everything is irradiated with moonlight. Or if there's only a sliver of moon, or none at all, the sky is filled with stars—even an occasional falling star. Since it's winter, the sky is often overcast. Or it might be snowing. But as the clock ticks on toward dawn, the sky lightens. Then on many days, I can watch the clouds. Sometimes they move swiftly, blown on the wind. At times they glide slowly, serenely across the sky. And they come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. As dawn advances they blossom into rose, pink, salmon, or deepest scarlet. What a show they put on!

Of course, this is actually my time of early morning prayer. And indeed I am praying! I give thanks to God for the gift of dawn and of a new day. I pray that God will guide and strengthen me

throughout my day. I pray for those I know, those who've asked our prayers, those who have been so generous to us. I pray for our country, for unity and peace, and for our elected

officials. I pray for the sick, especially those with Covid, and for their caregivers—and for an end to this dread disease.

And I watch the clouds. Does this seem like a distraction? Perhaps it is. Yet I can't help think that they manifest a bit of God's beauty, God's loveliness, the graceful fluidity of the Spirit. Like God, they are ever changing, ever new, yet ever the same. In their infinite variety, they reflect the infinite creativity of God.

Yet sometimes clouds can hang heavily, oppressively. An overcast, dreary sky can foster an overcast, dreary mood; especially when the overcast lasts for several days.

Especially in winter—not my favorite season!—a succession of overcast, cloudy or snowy days makes time seem heavy, interminable, as I wait for the weather system to pass.

Conversely, a clear sky blushing red at the horizon, presages a sunlit day, filled with optimism and hope.

My moods and emotions may not only reflect the weather

outside, they are in fact the face of the weather

inside. We are all subject to days of boredom or heaviness, or sadness; and these emotions can so easily be exacerbated by weather that seems to reflect our mood. As this pandemic continues to drag on, even though there is the hope of vaccines, all too often our moods reflect the weariness of enduring a vastly restricted lifestyle. Our moods may be somber, dark, at times hopeless or despairing, as we await our vaccine, and even more, as we wait for the pandemic to be over. The arrival of vaccines gives hope, the realization that the entire world needs to be vaccinated can plunge us back into darkness.

During my early morning prayer time, I not only watch the clouds as they float so effortlessly by, I also watch my inner sky and clouds—I mean my emotions. What is my inner

WATCHING

weather today? Is it despondency, or weariness, or anxiety? Or am I upbeat, cheerful, hopeful? Some days I might simply be bored. Or angry, or fearful.

One thing I have learned over the years is to pay attention to this inner weather. My emotions are as fleeting and changeable as the clouds; and furthermore I know from experience that the weather outside has a large impact on my internal weather. My emotions and my thoughts can move and change as often as the clouds and the wind. When I am feeling upset, depressed, sad, angry, or any other so-called ‘negative’ emotion, I need to remember that feelings change. Whatever I am feeling at any given moment, will—like the clouds—soon change, mutate, or even disappear. Further, I need to remember that all emotions—and I do mean *all*—are welcome. They aren’t bad, they aren’t good. They’re just emotions, and they’re job is to communicate to me where I’m really at, what’s really going on inside me.

In the midst of this continual inner motion, I need to focus on whatever is constant in my life. That may be as obvious as the need to prepare a meal, or get myself to work, or any other external task. Yet there is a deeper constant in my life, and in everyone’s life: and that constant is the Lord.

And so, as I sit and watch the clouds, I also watch my emotions. And as I watch, I pray. I open myself to the Lord, and as I sit with the clouds, and with my emotions, I sit with the

Lord. I invite God to be with me in these emotions. God is surely there in those gorgeous clouds. And equally so in my emotions. And as I sit, and watch, and be present, I am also open to the blue sky that is the clouds’ backdrop. Sometimes it’s hidden, but I know it’s always there. And equally certain, I know that God’s loving presence is also the peaceful backdrop of the emotions that blow through me. Sometimes that presence is hidden, but I know that more surely than the sky it is always there: peaceful, serene, always loving, always *with* me.

This Lent, as we endure the weariness and sadness of the pandemic, and wait for all to be vaccinated, let us remember to sit and watch and be present, knowing that all clouds, and all emotions, and all pandemics, will eventually pass. But God’s loving presence endures forever.

Sr. Elizabeth



FOCUS ON FORMATION Embracing Changes

Each day God takes a brush and paints on his great big canvas for us to see. Each day is different and even each hour is different. This ever-changing view makes the sky fascinating to watch or even inspire our imagination. But changes are not always as fascinating as watching the sky.

I am the type who likes predictability. Predictability implies security. Unfortunately life is not always predictable. Changes happen throughout our lives whether we wish them to be or not. Our lives are constantly changing both externally and internally as Sr. Elizabeth mentioned on the front page; the external and internal weather changes over time.

It is a challenge for me to face these changes, adapt to its unpredictability and get in the flow of these never-ending changes. Part of me wants to cling to what is pleasing and refuse the not so pleasing. But the reality is that life is like a wheel, sometimes we are on the top, sometimes we are on the bottom, sometimes we are in between. It is only natural and it is the way it is.

Somebody told me that if we are never hungry, we cannot savor the delight of having a meal. If we are never sad, we cannot appreciate happiness. If we are never been disappointed by others, we could never value true companionship.

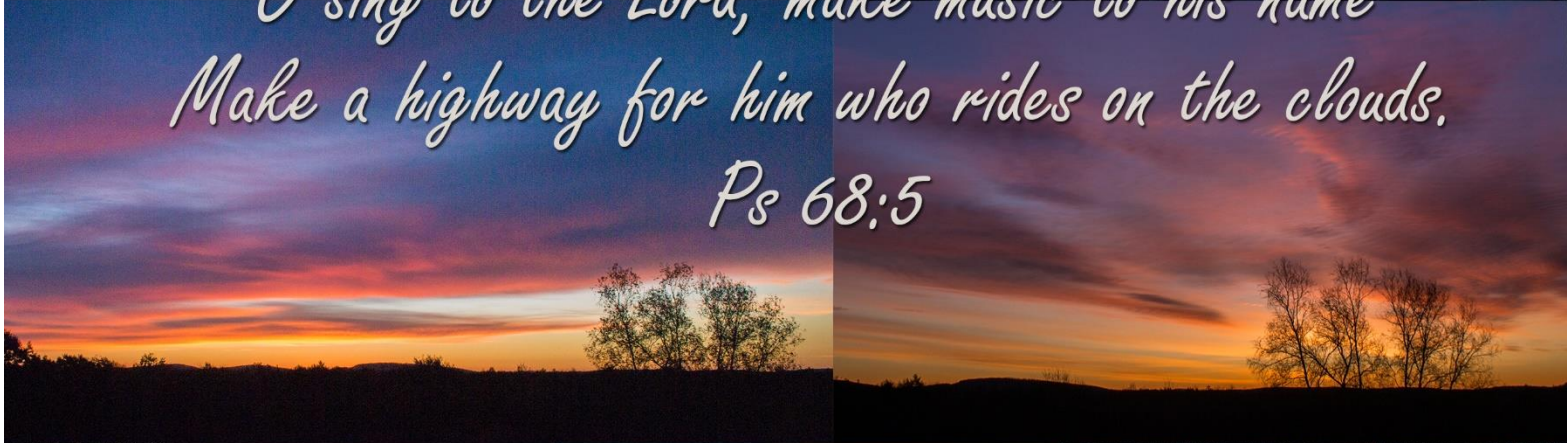
So what I am trying to do now is to work towards inner stability and be at peace in order to weather the changes and unpredictability in life.

The million dollar question is, how?

Sr. Scholastica



*O sing to the Lord, make music to his name
Make a highway for him who rides on the clouds.
Ps 68:5*



BENEFACTORS

November 2020 -January 2021

Anonymous (x5)
Margaret & Roger Alexander
Louise Allen
 mem Raymond Allen
John Allison
Mary Arell
Glenn Angell
Helen King Atallah
Sheila Avellar
Marian Barker
 mem Joan Phillips
Beverly Bartosiak
Mary & David Betts
Rev. Bette Bond
Shirley Brittell
 mem my husband Cal
Tony & Donna Burkart
Elizabeth Burns & Kevin Rung
Ruth Calderwood
Joan Carlson
Margaret Carpenter
Nancy Charette
 mem Constance Coulombe
Deacon Bob & Ann Cleveland
Marjorie Clifford
Linda Cocotas
 mem my mother
Paul Corkhun
Rev. Paul Coughlin
Gary Crocker
 mem Francis & Lorena Crocker
 & Ron Gamage
Rita Crowley
Helena Cyr
 mem George & Lisa
Jim & Genie Dailey
 mem our parents
Wolfgang & Patricia Demisch
Elise Dennis
Claire Deptula
Myrtie Dickey
Cynthia DiCola
Steve & Marty Dome
Scott & Sharon Dow
Page Eastman
Armand Favreau
Peter & Rosemarie Felt
Mary Fitts
Kathleen Flanagan
 mem Denise Drum
Jeanne Foti
Nicholas & Joanne Furnaratto
Barbara Gawle
Angela Gilladoga, MD
Dorothy & Marie Gondek

Patricia Goodspeed
Thomas Goyne
Ron & Gay Grant
Bob & Ramonda Grzymala
Geri Guerette
 mem husband Ray
Elizabeth Harmon
 mem Hack & Mary Olsen
Karen & Tom Hastings
 honor Robert Fuller, Jr
Kathleen Hegarty
Donna Heidemann
Patricia Heinz
Robert & Rachel Henry
Carol Hommick
Katie Huntington
 mem Carole McMurrer
Susan Hyde
Nancy Iacono
Maryann Ingalls
Peggy Johnston
Peggy Johnston
 mem Fr. Dennis Steik, SM
Claire Kaiser
Sue Kenny
Knights of Columbus
 Fr Druillete Ccl 2537
Knights of Columbus
 Pine Cone Ccl 114
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 OFM Conv
 mem Michael Krill &
 Fr. Tom Walsh, OFM Conv
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Anne P. Kuebel
Ron & Cynthia Kujak
Barbara Kurz
Pearley & Alice Lachance
Richard Lafond
Bob & Louise Lamothe
 mem Theresa Anctil
Janet Leaver
Pat & Joe Lepak
Jon Lightner
Lucinda Long
Linda Lloyd
Ann & John MacKay
 mem Patrick & Christopher
Dick & Sharon Marchi
Kathleen Martin
Mary Alice McLean
Leslye C. Menerey
Claudette & Phil Michaud
Joann Mooney
 mem Margaret & Ed Mooney
Connie Morin
Rev. Frank Morin
Joe Morelli
Catherine Moskosky

Rev. Frank Murray
Hilary Senese Nimons
Austine M. O'Connor
The O'Searcoid Family
Walter Osterman
Alison Otto
Constance Ouellette
Timothy E. Packey
Al Parker
Ken & Pat Parker
Elizabeth Phillips
Carol & Roger Pomerleau
Madeline Pomerleau
Norman Pomerleau
Donna Ptak
 mem Roger Ptak
Verna Rancourt
 mem Gerald Rancourt
Tom & Louise Reed
 mem William & EvaMcGrath
Deacon Joe Reid
Carol Rice Dempsey
Carol Rice
 mem Ed Wilson
Rev. Ray Richard
Shannon Robbins
Judith & Patrick Roche
 mem Gemella & Joseph Roche
Linda Roden
 mem Tony
Marilyn K Roper
 mem Elbridge &
 Claudette Gagnon
Jane Russo
Marie Santry
 honor Dr. Noreen Ferrante
Susan Sargent
Lynn Schafer
Pat Shaw
Richard Shoup
Kelly Shriver
Beury & Ellee Simons
Marc & Sarah Sirois
Roger Sirois
 mem Patrick & Elizabeth Sirois
Ardis Sitar
Barbara Snowadzky
Paulette & Russell Spera
 mem deceased family members
Rev. Paul Stefanko
Pande & Rita Stevens
 mem Polly Jettinghoff
Rose Marie Stolkner
Vivian Swank
 mem Virginia Warzocha
Richard & Jennie Swenson
 mem Jennie Falzone

BENEFACTORS CONTINUED

SWM, LLC David V. Smith
mem Gail Parker
Andy & Linda Turgeon
mem Gail Parker
Patricia Turner
Lou & Linda Wagner
Mr & Mrs Kevin Waldron
Carolyn Wallace
Lenore Wang
Judy Watson
Leigh Welch
Joe Weronko
Mary Lee Wile
Mike Will
Diane Williams
Lily Woo

Our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you who have contributed so generously, and especially to those who contribute each month. Since we have been unable to hold bake sales during the pandemic, your generosity has literally kept us afloat financially! Know that we hold all of you in our grateful prayers each and every day. And if we've forgotten to list you, or have misspelled your name, please let us know!

IN KIND DONATIONS

We are so grateful for the many generous people who support us in other ways, especially **Gunner & Deb**, for gifts of stamps, and Christmas & New Years goodies, for **Mary Fitts, & also Barbara Gawle**, for gift cards, for **Anne & Patty**, who brought us groceries almost every week, for **Deacon Jeff & Gina**, who brought a Thanksgiving turkey, for **Bob Lamothe** who fixed a leak under the garage door, for books from **Genie Dailey**, and last but not least, for **Quality Copy** of Augusta, for their generous discounts on printing, and for **Peggy Powis**, who always does a superb job of laying out our newsletter!

RETREATS

As we said in the last newsletter, St. Moira's retreat house is now open, despite the pandemic, with appropriate precautions in place. We can welcome only one person at a time (two or more if from the same family or 'pod'), and we let the building sit empty for a few days between people.

While it may seem strange to need quiet and solitude at a time when we are all asked to remain separate and mostly at home, the emotional stress this can cause is actually an important reason why people choose to come for a renewing and refreshing time away.

Our normal offering is still only \$50/day, and includes our delicious home-cooked meals. With snow on the ground, our outdoor trails call out for you to bring snowshoes and cross country skis.

A one night advance deposit is required

**FMI please call
207.445.8031**

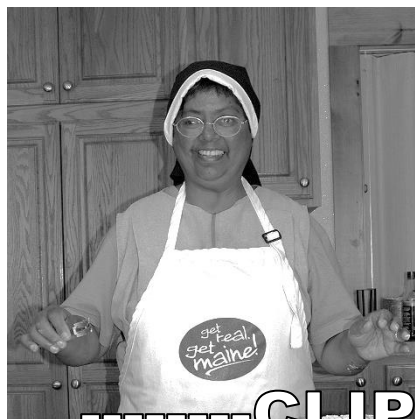
(business hours only, please)

or

e-mail

th.retreats@gmail.com

FROM Sr.B'S KITCHEN



CLIP AND SAVE

Stir-Fried Green Beans with Tofu

3-4 Servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 lb fresh Green Beans, sliced diagonally
- 1 pkg FIRM Tofu, cut in small cubes seasoned with tumeric & garlic powder
- Onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1" fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 1/2 t curry powder
- salt to taste
- 4T Cooking Oil (Veg or Olive)

Pan fry the tofu in approx 2T oil until light brown. Put aside. Heat a wok with remaining oil and throw in onion, garlic, ginger and let it sizzle. Add beans, salt to taste, add curry powder and mix well over low heat. When the beans are nice and succulent, throw in the tofu and give a good toss to mix..

Optional: You can add a dash of light soy sauce. Serve and enjoy over rice. Easy, delicious and nutritious for Lent or anytime!!

CLIP AND SAVE

Two Very Special Gifts

In November 2020 we received the first of two very special gifts. It arrived in a check from the Shea-Senese Fund. We'd never heard of it, and at first we even thought it might be a scam. But we remembered John Senese of Kennebunk, who had often purchased fruitcakes and jams, and an internet search turned up the name of his late wife, Ann Shea. Still later, we sent him a note of thanks...only to receive another note, with an accompanying gift, from their daughter Hilary, who explained that John had also gone home to the Lord, and wanted to share something with us!

In December we received a phone call from someone we didn't know, but who was the treasurer of the Limerock Council of the Knights of Columbus in Rockland, ME. He explained that the Knights had heard that Sr. Scholastica needed funds for her visa extension, and they wanted to provide for her. When they heard we'd already received funding, instead of changing their minds, they simply said 'use half for Sr. Scholastica's needs, and half for general expenses!' Which we have done, and are doing, as they will provide some of the funds needed as we search for a low mileage good used car.

Our enormous thanks and prayers for these good, generous people for providing for some important needs. What an inspiration you are to us: an inspiration because of the depth of your faith, and your commitment to helping our little corner of contemplative monastic life!

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HERMITAGE**
**needs your generosity and
support
for continued growth.
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envelope
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at**

www.transfigurationhermitage.org



**We also are building an
endowment fund for future
growth. Please consider
remembering us in your
bequests, legacies, trusts,
transfers, gifts.**

Book Review

Flora: Inside the Secret World of Plants: Smithsonian in association with Kew Royal Botanic Gardens, Helen Fewster senior editor. DK Penguin Random House New York, NY: 2018, 440 pp.

This is another fabulous book that our Sr. Scholastica found online at a used bookstore. It's immense, gorgeous, filled with amazing photographs, and all you might want to know about the plant universe. It begins with a description of the plant kingdom, answers in understandable language 'what is a plant?' (hint: a living organism that can make its own food via photosynthesis). Then goes on to differentiate non-flowering plants from flowering plants...you get the idea. Sections follow on roots, stems & trunks, leaves, flowers, seeds. Then finally a list, with photos and descriptions of numerous (probably not all!) of the families of plants, again with gorgeous photos and easily readable descriptions. Did you know that the rose family also contains apples, peaches, pears, etc? I didn't.

But: those photos! Wow, and wow again! I marvel over and over at the breadth and variety and beauty of God's wonderful creation—and also at the human creativity and vision that brought into being the science and the art that created this wonderful book. The original price for this book was \$50. Sr. Scholastica found it for much, much less than that.

One warning, though: it's big, it's hefty, it will take over the top of your coffee table! But if you love God's wonderful creation, go for it.

Sr. Scholastica