



The Hawaiian Benedictine

Newsletter of the:
Benedictine Monastery of Hawaii

With the canonical title of:
Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery

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Issue #129

In Pardoning We Are Pardoned

The Lord's Prayer is a beautiful prayer. Jesus himself gave it to us (Matthew 6:9-13). We pray it together at every Eucharist. We pray it in every rosary.

Yet I have to admit that one line in it makes me nervous. Maybe just about everyone feels that twinge. You probably know which line it is: *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.* I take it to mean that I am actually asking God to show mercy to me the way I show it to people who hurt me.

Now in the New Testament, there is nothing clearer than that God wants to forgive our sins. God is our Father in heaven who sent his Son to announce to the world how much he loves us and wants to forgive our evil deeds.

But there's another sure thing in the Gospels: our heavenly Father wants us to love one another the way He loves us. That includes forgiving one another. If we are adopted children of God, then we should be like our divine Father, full of mercy. Obviously, we cannot imitate God in power or knowledge. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, however, we can be true reflections of the divine mercy. That's a staggering thought.

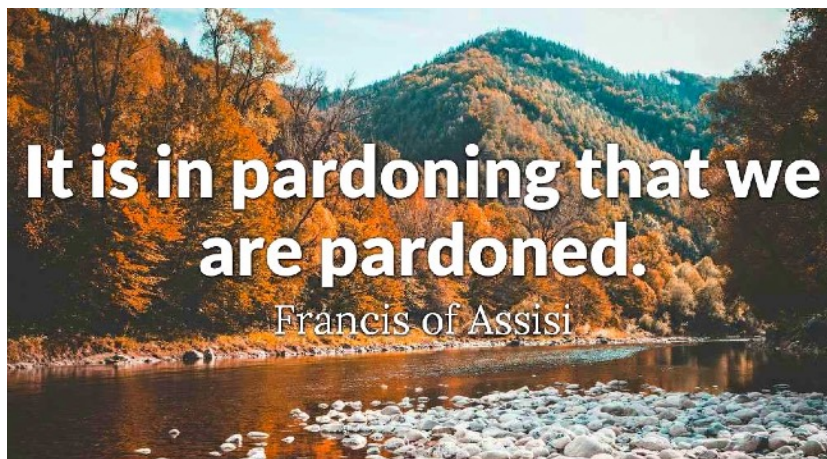
Saint Luke spells it out in his Gospel: "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you" (6:27-28 NRSV)

It seems crystal clear. The way to find forgiveness from God is to give it to our fellow human beings. There's no way around this spiritual reality, much as we might wish there were. "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12 NRSV).

How simply it can be stated. But how difficult it is to do. It's comes naturally to us to want an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. When someone insults us, harms us, cheats us, our immediate reaction is to return some evil on the perpetrator.

Our Father in heaven wants his children to be different. A tit-for-tat, vengeful reaction is not the way God works, and it is not the way God's human children should act. If we do insist

upon payback and punishment, we are giving the world the wrong impression of God. We are making God to be like us, when it should be the other way around. By our actions we should show that "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him (John 3:17 NRSV).



What St. Benedict advised his monks many centuries ago applies to all Christians: "Your way of acting should be different from the world's way; the love of Christ must come before all else. You are not to act in anger or nurse a grudge. Rid your heart of all deceit. Never give a hollow greeting of peace or turn away when someone needs your love...*Do not repay one bad turn with another*" (Rule, chap. 4).

So there's no escape. If we want to be true Christians, we must have a merciful heart. Achieving this will require much of us. We will have to tone down our pride, selfishness, hatred, impatience, prejudice, violence--all of which tend to stifle forgiveness. A Herculean task! A lifetime's labor.

Continued on Page 2



ON MY MIND

Dear Friends,

We seem to be on somewhat of a roll with the newsletters this year with the able assistance of Bill M. I hope we can keep this up, but who knows. They say enjoy it while you can. We do.

The baby boy in the photo with me is my grand nephew, Huck, who is the third child (all boys) of my niece Therese and her husband Greg. My sister Dona Marie is the most caring of grandmothers. Huck has had a dramatic and challenging young life as he was born with some serious swallowing difficulties, which have now been corrected with surgery. The family has seen God's providence first hand.

There is much anticipation here as our new candidate Scott W. is due to arrive in mid-September. Please continue to pray for vocations for our community and throughout the Church. We also want to acknowledge the marvelous contribution that our Oblates make to the life and ministry of our monastery. Their support in prayer and presence is a great blessing to us. The oblate program continues to grow with about six in the new oblate novitiate class started in June.

We pray for students beginning a new school year, especially those who are going off to college as freshmen to start a new adventure. May our Lord guide and bless them and keep them safe.

The love and peace of Jesus,

Fr. David

(Pardoning: from Page 1)

It doesn't mean that when circumstances require it, we cannot draw the line, take a firm stand and speak out against injustice, only that we do so without violence or vengeance.

Becoming a forgiving person is a goal to work toward. The first step is acknowledging that this is what our heavenly Father desires from us. The second step is accepting that fact and agreeing to work at it. It is important that it really becomes a spiritual goal that we are conscious of and seriously try to embody, even though we may fail at times.

If there is a person we just can't forgive, we can pray that our heart be changed. It is also beneficial to pray for that person, to "bless" the person. We may also seek counseling to help us extricate ourselves from an entrenched unforgiving attitude.

“My Vocation ...”

MS: “I seek intimacy and union with Christ... ..that He might have His way in my life.”

MJ: “In 6th and 7th grade and again in high school, I felt drawn to the religious life and so was able to enter after a year of college. This in 1951. How can I ever thank God for this gift, except to strive ever more each day for holiness.”

DB: “My first visit to a monastery was by the time I was one year old. Growing up it was always a ‘possibility.’ 3rd year of college I realized I needed to test monastic life before I got any more committed to a girl friend. Monastic life won.”

GS: “In discerning joining monastic life in 1981, I heard the words ‘important’ and ‘necessary.’ He gives us everything we need, to do what honors Him. Praise God!”

CC: “Doing God’s work for His people is such an honor - being called and chosen to do all I do for Him. I try to

The key thing is *wanting* to be a forgiving person and *working* towards that goal.

Forgiveness is actually a way of life. Being a forgiving person blesses you with courage and compassion and peace of mind. Moreover it has a calming effect on others, short-circuiting negative energy and permitting people to see more clearly, react less violently, and keep relationships warmer and happier.

How tenderly God showers all of us, those we like and those we don't like, with thousands of blessings every day. God loves every human being and wants each one to be saved. Jesus died for all, not just a chosen few. It is our privilege to be able to imitate God by showing kindness, mercy and forgiveness to everyone we encounter.

*by Jim Scully
long-time friend of the community*

love, respect, pray and bring hope to the outcast, to each person as if working directly with Jesus - to see Jesus in every person God puts in my path.”

The major thing that we all have in common is our sense of joy and fulfillment living in community and serving the Lord.

If you are in search of a loving and joyful community of men and women religious you might consider us.

Here is what you can do:

1. Contact Sr. CC our vocation director. (check out our website)
2. Arrange a visit to the monastery in order to get a taste of our community and see how we embody the Benedictine charism in the 21st century.
3. Attend our upcoming discernment weekend, details for which should be in our Winter newsletter.

May the peace of Christ fill your hearts as you respond to Jesus' call.

The Hawaii Benedictine community

Monastic Focus: Vocations

What is a vocation? Fundamentally it is a “call”. It derives from the Latin “vocare” which literally means “to call”. But it is not just a sound resonating through the air that we happen to notice with our ears. Rather it is an address, one person speaking to another, for the purpose of eliciting a response. However this response does not involve just a casual chat between two people or a sharing of information. A vocation is a call to action and even more a call to commitment. When it is God who is calling the call always implies an invitation to enter into a more intimate relationship with the one who creates, redeems and sanctifies us.

The Second Vatican Council states that God’s call is to all people. As the council document *Lumen Gentium* states there is a “universal call to holiness” which is nothing other than a call to enter into an intimate union with the Trinitarian God. The form of this call is as varied as the people to whom it is addressed. Some are called to the single state and some are called to be married. Others have a call to live the evangelical counsels in a cloistered setting or in community. God sets them aside so that they can enter into a more immediate relationship with Him.

Such is the calling of those of us who are members of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery. We are a monastic community of 2 celibate men and 3 celibate women, invited by God, touched by his love, and prompted by the Holy Spirit, to seek closer unity with him. The Lord Jesus leads us to do this through the Rule of St. Benedict and the guidance of our prior Fr. David Barfknecht in prayer and work. Professing conversion of life, stability in the community, obedience, celibacy, and poverty, we hope to liberate ourselves through our vows to follow him along the narrow way that leads to eternal life. With Mary, patroness of the monastery, as mother and guide, we desire to give our “yes” to Jesus. She brought forth Jesus, giving God flesh through her faith. We, following her example, give our “yes” to God and abandon ourselves to the Holy Spirit, that Jesus might take flesh in our lives. In this school of the Lord’s service, following the Benedictine rule, we can run along the way with hearts enlarged by love, so that, united with Christ, we can say with St. Paul, “Now I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20). (adapted from the Statutes of the monastery.)

Several people are discerning their entrance into community at this time. Those seeking more information about entrance into the community should contact the vocation directress Sr. CC who, together with Fr. David and Sr. GERALYN, make up the vocation committee which is in charge of helping potential candidates discern their vocations.

It is also a joy to us that our oblate program remains vigorous. In the Benedictine tradition, oblates are lay associate members who live in the world but seek to follow the monastic spiritual life in a closer way by making oblation of themselves to God and to Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery. While they do not profess vows they strive after holiness inspired by the Rule of St. Benedict and according to the circumstances of their lives. After entering the oblate novitiate they attend monthly classes with Fr. David in order to understand and appreciate Benedictine spirituality. After this year of preparation and the approval of the religious of the monastery, they make their final oblation, placing themselves at the service of Christ and His Church.

May all of us follow God’s call to holiness by entering into a profound and intimate relationship with Jesus so that He may transform us. Let us say yes to His offer of love and offer ourselves to Him in turn.



Our community, up close and personal



Sr. CC with lots of children at a homeschool retreat day at the monastery



Bear and Joan made final oblation, several others enter oblate novitiate, June 3rd, Oblate Sunday

FROM THE DAILY LOG:

MS- Fr. Michael Sawyer
 DB- Fr. David Barfknecht GS- Sr. GERALYN Spaulding
 MJ- Sr. Mary Jo McEnany CC- Sr. Celeste Cabral

May 20: DB and Deacon Jonathon (oblate, BCCH) at special charismatic Mass on Pentecost at Holy Trinity Parish. GS and Bill also in attendance.

May 25: DB, MS, MJ, GS, Bill attend Romple's ordination to the transitional diaconate St. John's in Mililani. Chuuk dancers were a highlight of the evening entertainment.

June 4: DB birthday celebration at Hawaii BlueNote Beat-lele concert with band members Dennis and Nolette (BCCH members). On 6/9 Father turned 69. Yikes!

June: Ann Beth from New Zealand spent the month with us doing various kinds of service, especially gardening care and supporting our community prayer life. She left in time to get to Spain for the birth of a 1st child for one of her daughters.

June 6 - July 11: Scott and Kathy Aldinger visit from Savannah, GA. They were a big help around the monastery doing such things as cooking, lawn work, maintenance with DB, and cleaning. Kudos are in order for the work that Scott and friends accomplished by re-illuminating the cross on the hill.

July 3 - Aug 1: Fr. Edwin, a LaSalette priest, arrives to assist the community during Fr. David's home visit. He was much appreciated for his cheerful and friendly disposition. An expert Hula dancer, his halau took 1st place in the 2004 Merry Monarch competition. He and CC performed hula on the solemnity of St. Benedict. Later in the day the community went to Haleiwa Joe's restaurant, and visited a Hawaiian heiau as a celebration.

CC Home visit: (May-June) Visited 7 states: California, Oregon, Kansas, Missouri, Michigan, Indiana and Nebraska visiting family and friends with a special stop at Ft. Leavenworth federal prison to visit an inmate. It was a blessing being able to cheer on my nephew Trevor Larnack who played for Oregon State University at the college world series baseball championship. In the final game Trevor hit a 2-run homer to win the world series.

DB home visit: (July) Updates on the new babies on the way as well as meeting the newest arrivals. Last 10 days of July was family camp-out which was a great opportunity to catch up with most of the family.

MJ home visit: (1st two weeks of August) MJ had a much appreciated 4-day visit with good friend Catherine near San Diego before going on to CO to visit her brother Larry, wife Dottie and family and a few other long time friends in the surrounding area. A much deserved rest.

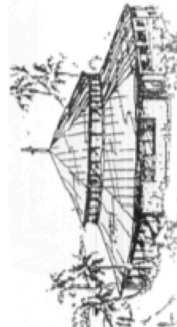
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JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



CALENDAR

Sept.

- 15 BCCH Workday - (Haleiwa cell) et al
- 22 All BCCH Annual Retreat, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
- 29 Spanish comm Life in the Spirit @ monastery

Oct.

- 1-5 Kalaupapa retreat -Sr. CC spiritual director
- 5-7 Rachel's Vineyard Retreat - Post Abortion Healing (Call: Sr. GERALYN at 741-3819 for information)
- 6 Spanish Conversation Group (Henry) 12-3pm
- 13 BCCH Workday - (Kaimuki cell) et al
- 14 Oblate Social Picnic, Haleiwa Ali'i Beach Park, 12:30 pm (Call Sr. GERALYN for details.)
- 16 Catholic Homeschool Retreat @ monastery
- 20 Damien High School -Workday @ monastery
- 27 BCCH Youth pre-retreat - monastery 8:00 am
- 27 Diocesan Youth Day - St. Ann's parish-Sr. CC

Nov.

- 2-4 BCC Youth Retreat #57 - St. Anthony's - Call Sr. Mary Jo for information 285-0254
- 4 Oblate Sunday, memorial for those deceased
- 24 BCCH Adult pre-retreat - monastery 8:00 am
- 30-12/2 BCCH Adult Retreat # 117-St. Anthony's - Call Sr. Mary Jo for information 285-0254

Dec.

- 2 Oblate Sunday, Dallas Carter
- 5 BCCH Thanksgiving Mass - 6:30 pm
 St. Anthony Retreat Center

The Hawaiian Benedictine is distributed quarterly by the Benedictine Monastery of Hawaii free to benefactors, friends and anyone who requests it.

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