



The Hawaiian Benedictine

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Issue #127

Lent and Easter: Living the Great Story

The holy season of Lent is upon us. Lent is many things, far more than merely giving up candy or movies. Perhaps Lent could best be summed up as our opportunity to become a living player in the greatest story ever told.

The Story of Stories is, of course, the life, work, death and rising of Jesus of Nazareth. This is the story that more than two billion people today believe really happened long ago but is so powerful it continues to happen today. We call it the Gospel, the Good News. It tells about what occurred in the past, but what it recounts is not dusty history but a living, present reality.

Jesus lives! The whole history of His life on earth also lives. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel has the power to convince people that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who unites us with Himself so we can share in the merits of His holy deeds and become adopted children of God.

The work Jesus did during his sojourn on earth He continues to do today. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work in all who believe to conform them to the pattern of Jesus. The Spirit shapes us all. The Spirit draws us all into the Great Story.

The Great Story is a mystery, not a puzzle we could never solve, but a reality so immensely rich that we can constantly deepen our understanding of it. And as our comprehension increases, so also does our ability to become part of the Story. Old as the Story is, it is always new to those who enter it with their hearts and souls. The Holy Spirit revealing aspects and dimensions we did not suspect. As we grasp the meaning of the story in a more

profound way and live up to that new vision, we always discover another, deeper dimension. This is our life in Christ, a journey of spiritual discovery. Jesus is the Way. As we walk the Way, we become more Christ-like.

The Church has set aside the season of Lent/Easter to encourage all believers to reacquaint themselves with the Great Story and to make the effort to allow it to come alive more fully in themselves.



How do we do this? Primarily by taking part in the Sunday liturgies. As a Prayer over the Offerings expresses it: "Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished." The Sunday's readings, prayers and homily all help us to

delve more deeply into the Great Story so we ourselves can play a bigger role in it ourselves. To receive the Eucharist is to receive everything that Jesus has to give and to be drawn into His life, death and resurrection.

Another important aspect of Lent and Easter is the prayer and meditation we engage in when we are at home. We can pray the rosary every day, pondering the mysteries of Christ's life and work. Whatever type of prayer we favor, we can intensify it, relating it to the themes of the weekly liturgy.

Besides meditating on the Sunday (or weekday) liturgical readings and prayers, we can resolve to read at least one of the four Gospels from beginning to end. If we have an hour or so, we can even read the Gospel of Mark all the way through in one sitting. The Story has a powerful impact when we read it this way.

Continued on Page 2



ON MY MIND

Dear Friends,

I want to express my thanks to Jim Scully for continuing to write our feature article and to our new candidate, Bill Myszkier, for helping with this issue.

I also want to thank Andrew and Brittany for allowing their daughter Lucia to appear with me in the photo. We are blessed with the visit of babies and children of all ages at Sunday Mass and monthly homeschool retreat days. When I go home on vacation, every other year, some in my family call me the baby snatcher for my great delight in entertaining babies. So I am going to try to appear with a featured "Baby of the Season". Thank you, Lucia, for showing up as our Miss Spring.

We have, at long last, decided to close down our walk-in freezer and replace it with 3 home style upright freezers in hopes of greatly reducing our electric bill. Updates to follow.

We wish to give a big Thank You to all who made contributions to the monastery this past year. Your support is essential to our ability to continue on.

*The love and peace of Jesus,
Fr. David*

(Lent and Easter: from Page 1)

Lent is also a time of fasting. Fasting from food reminds us to fast from sin. Lent invites us to take an honest look at our lives. Where do I fail to be Christ-like? As I recall the personality and character of Jesus, where do I fail to be like him? The Spirit urges me to make Jesus the model of my life. Where am I falling short? Do I need to fast from pride, anger, contempt, hatred, prejudice, violence, arguing, controlling? Do I need to put more stress on repentance, patience, asking for forgiveness, being understanding, helpful, kind, gentle, loving? How can I be of service to others, to the poor?

The Church offers the sacrament of reconciliation to give us forgiveness for our failures and an impetus toward newness of life.

Lent reminds us that we have been baptized into the death and

resurrection of Jesus. Our bodies are now members of Jesus Christ (Romans 6). We are the aroma of Christ in the world for God's sake (II Corinthians 2:15). Our attitudes should be like those of Jesus (Philippians 2:5).

The Holy Spirit strengthens us and leads us in this direction. Lent is the opportune time to get in sync with the Spirit, to plunge into the Great Story. St. Paul cheers us on: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:6 NRSV).

Having a Lent like that will ensure that at Easter we will know a new dimension of joy. Alleluia!

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

"It is only right, with all the powers of our heart and mind, to praise You Father and Your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

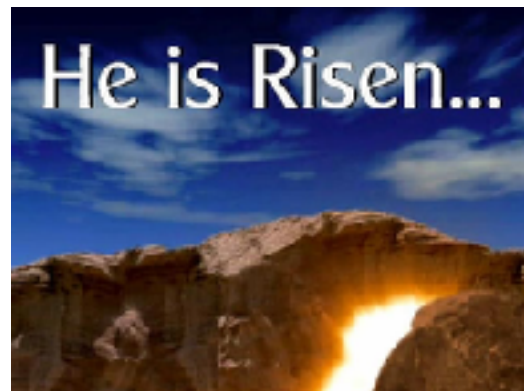
Dear Father, by Your wondrous condescension of Loving-Kindness toward us, Your servants, You gave up Your Son.

Dear Jesus You paid the debt of Adam for us to the Eternal Father by Your Blood poured forth in Loving-Kindness. You cleared away the darkness of sin by Your magnificent and radiant Resurrection. You broke the bonds of death and rose from the grave as a Conqueror. You reconciled Heaven and earth. Our life had no hope of Eternal Happiness before You redeemed us. Your Resurrection has washed away our sins, restored our innocence and brought us joy.

How inestimable is the tenderness of Your Love! We pray You, Lord, to preserve Your servants in the peaceful enjoyment of this Easter happiness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Who lives and reigns with God The Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen."

Easter Prayer of St. Gregory the Great, OSB



*May you have a Blessed Easter!
The Hawaii Benedictines*

Monastic Focus: Community

What is the point of monastic life? Is it not enough for the Christian to draw close to the Lord in prayer, and work in His vineyard for the salvation of souls? For many Christians this indeed is the pattern of their lives. But in the 6th century St. Benedict, drawing on the past traditions of centuries, proposed a rule where dedicated Christians would band together in communities to serve the Lord and strive to forge bonds of mutual charity and support.

Sister Jane Michele McClure, OSB states, “The importance of community life is a great theme of Benedict’s Rule. Prior to Benedict, religious life was the life of the hermit, who went to the desert and lived alone in order to seek God. Benedict’s genius was understanding that each person’s rough edges—all the defenses and pretensions and blind spots that keep the monastic from growing spiritually—are best confronted by living side by side with other flawed human beings whose faults and failings are only too obvious. St. Benedict teaches that growth comes from accepting people as they are, not as we would like them to be... Benedictines promise to allow themselves to be shaped and molded by the community—to be open to change, to listen to others, and not to run away when things seem frustrating or boring or hopeless.”

All of this can sound rather daunting but there are also moments of joy that only a life in community can bring. The Benedictines in Hawaii celebrated Thanksgiving and Christmas with our friends from around the island.

There was the hustle and bustle around the monastery as the BCCH community helped decorate the monastery while oblate Henrietta and our volunteer Pinky were busy in the kitchen baking. The joyful pace continued in writing Christmas cards and preparing Christmas gifts for the many wonderful benefactors who have helped us over the years. We exchanged “Secret Santa” gifts on Christmas Eve accompanied by sweets and a little “Christmas Cheer”.

Visiting priests Fr. Matthew and Jeffrey from Nebraska celebrated Mass for the Homeschool children’s Christmas Party hosted by Sister CC while our friend Chester stepped in to fill Santa’s shoes.

But community life is not only celebrating the holiday season. No. It also means celebrating birthdays! December meant the celebration of the birthdays of two community members. Sr. Geralyn celebrated her birthday on the feast of the Immaculate Conception and Sr. MaryJo on December 29. While most people enjoy these outings Fr. David put on a “Grinchy” face just to show that some still need to get into the community spirit while long-time oblate Carole flashed a joyous smile.

Community is never complete without Jesus Christ by whom we are knit together in one body. Thanks be to God!



A Community Photo from Summer, 2017



Sr. MaryJo's Birthday celebration



Fr. Michael distributes the Holy Eucharist to Pat Riley

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

Dec. 1: Tony, long-time monastery friend and baker extraordinaire, arrives for an extended stay at the monastery while his condominium is being renovated. Tony found a way into our heart with his quiet presence with us in choir and burrowed a way into our sweet tooth with his scrumptious Sunday morning cinnamon rolls. Many prayers, Tony, as your condo nears completion.

Dec. 24-25: After all the preparations in getting ready for Christmas the day was too soon upon us. We were joined by guests Carole, a longtime oblate friend, and by Rocky and Shiela accompanied by her Shitzu service dog Cali. The baking was done and the shopping for "Secret Santa" gifts had been completed. Our media room looked lovely after many of our friends had helped with the decorations. Only one thing was missing DB's famous "Tom and Jerry's Christmas Eve beverages. Now this is not made with Tom and Jerry's ice cream as you may suppose but with eggnog and a generous dose of rum and brandy. The two quarts of eggnog had been guarded for weeks as DB looked at it longingly in anticipation. DB had gone to the store and picked up the requisite adult beverages including a bottle of Irish cream for good measure, all the while extolling the virtues of the T&J. Christmas Eve CC donned a Santa's hat and began passing out presents. MS got a new digital watch. GS received new journals. CC received gift cards to Sr. Ann's favorite restaurant McDonald's. MJ got a beautiful sweater. DB's longed for yearly planner did not arrive but Captain Crunch did and that was some consolation. DB was undeterred. The Tom and Jerry's awaited. The eggnog, the rum and the brandy were measured in perfect proportions. The drinks were passed around and the Christmas toast was made. Ewww! The eggnog had gone bad! Praise be to God that our Christmas Eve was saved by the Irish (cream)! We are not party animals, however, and so we soon headed to bed.

Jan. 13: CC presents a retreat at the monastery for Confirmation students of Our Lady of Good Counsel parish. The community huddles in the basement in prayer during the missile scare. After the all clear was given, CC begins her retreat with the children that arrive. The event provided many with an opportunity for reflection.

Jan. 18: Community attends the diaconate ordination. BCCH members and Benedictine oblates Jonathon Ocampo and Gary Streff were among the ten that were ordained.

Feb. 25: Pat Riley and her family came to the monastery to celebrate her 79th birthday. Pat has always been special to the Hawaii Benedictine Community because she was the realtor who found our first property in Honolulu in 1983. Later MS laid out his dream for an ideal monastery location. Once again Pat came through. She located our present property which has been our home since 1987. But she has been much more than a realtor for us - she has been a long-time friend, adviser, and spiritual support of the monastery and our community. Happy birthday, Pat!

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JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

Benedictine Monastery of Hawaii
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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



MAR.

- 2-4 BCCH Adult Retreat #116 - St. Anthony's - call Sr. MaryJo for info: 285-0254.
- 3 Our Lady of Good Counsel Confirmation Retreat (Sr. CC)
- 4 Lenten Oblate Retreat - Monastery
Sunday 10:0am - Potluck Dinner,
Bill Myszkiel: "Our Lenten Journey to Easter."
- 5 Fr. Michael's sister and niece, Marie and Donna,
(Fr. David's mother and sister) arrive.
- 7 BCCH Thanksgiving Mass #116 - St. Anthony's
- 10 Schofield Confirmation Retreat (Sr. CC)
- 10 St. Elizabeth's Women's Group Retreat (Sr. CC)
- 10 RCIA retreat - St. John's Mililani / St. Jude
- 14 Military Wives pray Stations of the Cross - Monastery
(Sr. CC)
- 16-17 Life Teen - Military Young Adults (Sr. CC)
- 24 Youth BCCH PreRetreat #56 (Sr. MJ)

APR.

- 6-8 Youth BCCH Retreat #56 - St. Anthony's - call Sr. MaryJo for info: 285-0254.
- 7 St. John's LifeTeen Retreat at Camp Waianae (Sr. CC)
- 8 Oblate Sunday. 2pm - Monastery. Rose Balayen (EADM)
"Divine Mercy Sunday"
- 13-15 Maui Family Parish Retreat (Sr. CC)
- 15 Celebration of Fr. Michael's Birthday hosted by BCCH
- 27-29 Rachel's Vineyard Retreat; Call Sr. GERALYN for info: 741-3819.

May

- 6 Oblate Sunday. Sr. MaryJo: "Our Lady, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother"
- 7-11 Community Retreat preached by Fr. Darren Zehnle
- 14-18 Diocesan Convocation of Priests

June

- 3 Oblate Sunday. Jason Jones: "In Solidarity with the Vulnerable"

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