



**Salve, festa dies, toto venerabilis aevo;  
Qua Deus infernum vincit, et astra tenet.  
Hail, thou festive, all venerable day!  
Wherein God conquers Hell, Christ Heaven holds.**

Easter 2006

Dear Friends of Clear Creek Monastery,

Easter is no ordinary time. It is a day apart. According to the Jewish manner of counting the days of the week, Sunday corresponded with the first day, the first day of creation, the first day of everything. When Our Lord rose from the dead, all was forever transformed. Sunday became more like the “eighth day”, the day of eternity, as the Fathers liked to say. The Venerable Dom Prosper Gueranger describes the initial moments of the first Easter of our salvation:

“The day of light, Sunday, has begun, and its early dawn is struggling with the gloom. The Soul of Jesus immediately darts from the prison of limbo, followed by the whole multitude of the holy souls that are around Him. In the twinkling of an eye, it reaches and enters the sepulcher, and reunites itself with that Body which, three days before, it had quitted amidst an agony of suffering. The sacred Body returns to life, raises itself up, and throws aside the winding-sheet, the spices and the bands.”

*(Liturgical Year, Easter Sunday)*

The joy of universal victory resounds in the ancient stanzas of the great Christian poet, St. Venantius Fortunatus, which we still sing during the procession before Easter Mass — *Salve, festa dies*. After the long days of fasting and penance, this song of Easter morning renews the monk — or anyone who has the good grace to catch its accents — like a life-giving breeze in the sails of the soul. It is at times like these that we realize what a privilege it is to live the fullness of the Catholic liturgy.

Such is the plenitude of this day of days, of this feast of feasts that Holy Mother Church treats each day within the octave as being the prolongation of Easter Sunday. Over and over the Paschal Anthem reminds us that we are touching something beyond time:

“Haec dies quam fecit Dominus... This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice therein. Alleluia.”

Foundation for the Annunciation Monastery of Clear Creek

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## **A Time for Monks**

Lent is truly a time for monks and for those who have monastic souls. During forty days each year we rediscover a certain unity of our being amid the stricter poverty of material goods. Someone who has never fasted for a whole Lent does not know how good a simple piece of bread can taste!

This year the usual austerity of Lent was somewhat lessened for the monks of Clear Creek by the presence of our beloved Abbot Antoine from Fontgombault Abbey, our "Motherhouse" in France. He came to receive the simple vows of one of our young novices. Other important moments included the "Mandatum" or official entry of a Postulant into his canonical Novitiate year and the entry into the choir of a new postulant. Abbot Forgeot was here for nearly three weeks. Thus we were able to have pontifical Masses on the feast of Saint Benedict (March 21) and for the Annunciation (March 25) — our patronal feast day — which was chanted in the crypt of our future church. On the feast of Saint Joseph, the day of the simple profession, Divine Providence blessed us with some much needed rain, after many weeks of severe drought.

## **A Construction Project in the Works**

As the time to begin building again approaches, the monastic community has become a little impatient to know exactly when this will happen. Many of you are probably feeling the same thing. As of the writing of this letter, I still do not know the specific date, but I hope by the time it reaches you much progress will have been made towards this goal. We continue to be overwhelmed by your generosity, which is no small part of the prayer of thanksgiving we send heavenward during these days of Paschal tide.

There seems no more fitting conclusion for this little Easter message than to quote once more from the Easter Song of St. Venantius Fortunatus:

"Qui crucifixus erat Deus...The crucified God now reigns over all things; and every creature to its Creator tells a prayer. Hail thou festive, all venerable day, wherein God conquers Hell, Christ Heaven holds."

May God bless you and Our Lady smile down upon you.



Bro. Philip Anderson, Prior of Our Lady of Clear Creek

P. S. In answer to a question posed by some of you, toward the end of the year we do intend to publish monetary figures about gifts received.