



Watching for Dawn

Laudate Dominum de caelis. . . Praise the Lord from the heavens. . . Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all the deeps; Ye fire and hail, ye snow and ice, ye storm winds and obey His word. (Psalm 148)

Lent 2008

Dear Friends of Clear Creek Monastery,

Here is a parable. When the monks make their way to the near-freezing Oratory, well before dawn, to sing once again the Psalms of David and the whole Divine Office of the Church, something poetic (for lack of a better term) occurs, something quite unnoticed by the world of politicians and of CEOs, of Hollywood celebrities and of the vast number of sleeping citizens, something sublime in its utter simplicity.

Man truly is a microcosm, a miniature of the created universe. He is part mineral, part plant, part animal, part Angel . . . in touch with it all. When the monk recites or sings the words of the ancient prayer, he collects in his heart, as it were, the voices of all creation: *Praise Him, sun and moon, praise Him all ye stars and light*. These wonderful things that have come out of the hands of the Creator now return to Him, not in material fashion, but in the form of praise. Thus the circle is made perfect, the gift of the universe returns to its uncreated Source, in a canticle of love and adoration.

There is a parable in this. Just as this monk, with numb fingers, shivering slightly beneath the folds of his cowl, prays and watches for the return of dawn, so the world as a whole, living in the shadow of death and of sin — redeemed, yet still in need of entering fully into the fullness of saving grace — awaits the blessed coming of the light of God. Children have the privilege of not knowing much about this darkness. Even among adults, only the poor and the marginal elements of society habitually perceive just how deep the darkness is — the others being temporarily blinded by the seeming security of material comforts. Practically speaking, few are the hearts fully in tune with the canticle of praise. And yet, this song of praise in the night must go on. It is the monk's special portion, his part and privilege, to pray and watch. He would not exchange it for the world.

As we pray and watch during this Lenten season, there is the added joy of the approach of Easter. This year, in particular, we are looking forward during Paschaltide to the blessing of our new monastery, to take place on April 12th. You are all are invited! Our Bishop has accepted to celebrate a Pontifical High Mass on that day and to bless the new building where we now live. Father Abbot Antoine of Fontgombault expects to be present, along with several visitors

Foundation for the Annunciation Monastery of Clear Creek

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from France. As the monastic enclosure has not yet been permanently established, there will be a chance for all to visit much of the new monastery after Mass that day until the hour of Vespers. The happy completion of the residence and soon — as we hope — of the Gatehouse (now under construction) prompts us to look with confidence toward completing the monastery, especially the abbatial church. Already plans are shaping up with respect to that important step. I will have more to say about these plans later this year. For the moment, our focus is clearly on having everything ready for April 12th. To say the least, there is a great amount of work remaining to be accomplished.

Our prayers go out to all of you during this time of prayer and penance highlighted this year by the 150th anniversary of the apparitions at Lourdes. May the mysterious Lady who appeared to Bernadette Soubirous at the grotto of Massabielle — and who finally revealed her name, “the Immaculate Conception” — assist you in your own pilgrimage toward the light of Our Lord’s glorious Resurrection. Thank you for your prayers for us and for all your help, of which we continue to have great need.

In Our Lord and Our Lady,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Br. Philip Anderson, Prior". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

br. Philip Anderson, Prior

A NOTE FROM FATHER CELLARER

As we continue to “settle in” and discover the challenges of our new monastic setting, I hope I might share with you some rather concrete needs that come up. One that has recently emerged stems from the fact that our Oratory in the crypt is much bigger than that of the old barn-chapel. Most of the rugs we put out for liturgical Feasts have now become too small. If anyone would know of some fairly large rugs — even rather worn ones — we would be interested in acquiring a few. Thank you in advance!