

Monastic Musings

News and Views of the Eastern Rite Monastics
of the
Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church

June 2010

From the Idle keyboard

by: hieroschemamonk Barb

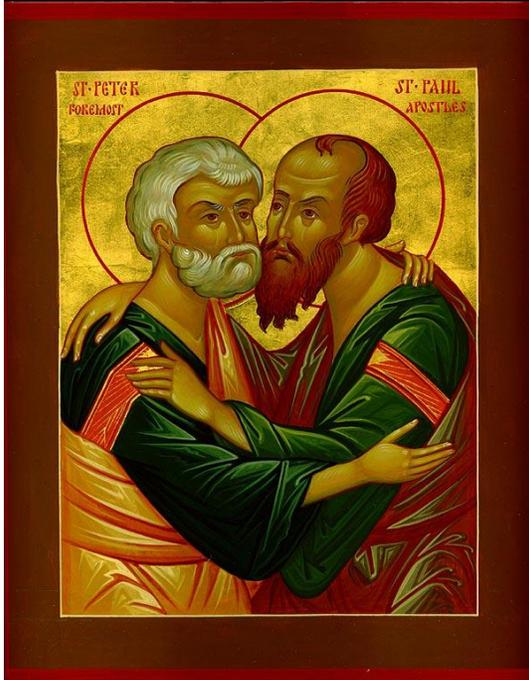
I wish to thank all of you for your kind words concerning the newsletter. I know I appreciate them, and so does Mother Myrella. It keeps us wanting to share more with each of you – so thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

June is a wonderful month! It is a time when students of High Schools and Colleges are graduating. They end one part of their lives and get ready to move into the next part of their lives. Much fear and joy is felt during this period of change.....And is that not what the church undergoes every day? There is not one person in this world that can say, this is exactly how things are and nothing can change it...Nothing, but nothing in this world is constant but God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit!!!

For me, June is a period of “healing”. The weather is warmer so I am able to be outside doing more activities. And yes, it means more chores for me to have to do around the house, but I really don’t mind. I can spend the time in God’s creation enjoying all the warmth and beauty he has given us: listening to all the birds talking, seeing all of the new life being born – the birds, rabbits, skunks, etc that live around us here. I have the opportunity to buy fruits and vegetables from the farms and enjoy walking in the many parks around our area. I can sit and contemplate the wonders created by God for all of us to enjoy!!! Yes, June brings new life to the world around us if we take the time to see it and enjoy it....

June is also the month that we celebrate Saints Peter and Paul. Peter was the first apostle to be called by Jesus; Paul originally persecuted the Jews but in time became a follower of Jesus’ teachings and an apostle. Both men had their personal ups and downs in life both physically and spiritually but became strong leaders for the church. It is through their lives and teachings that we learn how we can see things very differently in our lives if we just open our hearts to following the Holy Spirit.

Peter denied Jesus three times the night of Jesus' capture, but notice that Jesus forgave him for doing so. This denial was out of fear but in time he remembered his true calling – to guide and direct Jesus' followers as Jesus had told him to do. He did not have an easy time doing this but he constantly moved forward to see that Jesus' teachings were taught to all who would listen.



Paul had spent his life persecuting the Jews. But one day, the Holy Spirit came to him and Paul finally listened. His life at that moment changed and he learned to listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Our lives take so many twists and turns. Sometime we really just don't know which way to go any longer. We just want to give up and "die". What we forget so often is that if we just would listen to the small voice in us, it is telling us what we should be doing and even

how to do it. Within us lives the Holy Spirit who for some reason we as humans love to ignore. We always seem to think we know better how to do the things needed. When we make a mess of our lives, we finally turn to God and ask for help. God answers our cry for help, but then we often elect not to listen; so, it is right back on the same path of "destruction" that we have always walked. Would it have not been easier to truly listen and do what God has told us to do? I suspect we would realize that God with his all seeing eyes can better evaluate the situation we find ourselves in and give us the necessary guidance. But in this, we have to learn to let go of our control and let God have control of our lives.

So many times I have heard people say that God just does not understand what they are going through. Well, you know what, God does understand. Jesus experienced life completely so that God would be able to completely understand. It gives God that perspective of being able to look at the situation and then say, "hey, here is what you need to do to make things better". Instead we like to beg for God's help and then turn our backs on the help. Yes, listening to God's guidance might mean walking to the "beat of a different drummer", but then St. Paul did that, so what is wrong with it. People may think that you are little strange in the way you do things, talk, act, etc, but it is fine to be different. We need to come to a point in our lives that we realize that we are children of God and thus we were made in his image. God has actually provided us with everything that we need in this world. But, we must "let go and let God". What a unique way to live!

Will it be easier to live with God in control? Not necessarily since the world loves to look with a squint at those who do not "conform" to the norm. In all actuality, life will be much easier when you walk with God and let him guide and direct you. Will it prevent you from

never having the moments of despair or pain? Not necessarily, but you will be able to handle those moments since you know that God is right there beside you, comforting and guiding you out of the momentary darkness.

So this day, I challenge each and every one of you to let go of your control and let God control your life. Walk with God in all things. Let God be the guiding force within your life knowing that with God all things are possible!

Desert Wisdom

You Have Done Well

It was said about Zeno that when he was living in Scetis he went out of his cell at night, going towards the marshes. He spent three days and three nights there wandering at random. At last, tired out, his strength failed him, and he fell down as though dying when suddenly a little child stood before him with bread and a jar of water and said to him, "Get up, and eat."

Zeno stood up and prayed, thinking it was an illusion. The child said to him, "You have done well." Zeno prayed a second, and then a third time. The child said again, "You have done well."

Then the hermit got up, took some of the food and ate. The child said to him, "As far as you have walked, so far are you from your cell. So, then get up and follow me." Immediately he found himself in his cell.

Then the hermit said to the child, "Come in and let us pray." But when Zeno went inside, the other had vanished.

"Make Straight the Way of the Lord"

by Rev. Mother Myrella LeClair

June 24 is the Feast of the Nativity St. John the Baptist, who is also known as St. John the Forerunner. As Forerunner, his mission was to prepare the way for Christ: "I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him". (John 3:28) God's will for John is that he be a witness to Jesus as the Son of God. John readily accepted his role as a servant and minister of God. Through his teachings and baptisms, John brought many people to Christ.

Before he became a servant of God, John had to listen to God's Voice and to understand what God was asking of him. He then had to be willing to do God's will. To use the vernacular, "John the Baptist "let go and let God".

How then can we come more like John? We must communicate with God, and we communicate with Him through prayer. As we pray, we still our minds and listen for the Holy Spirit's voice. The Holy Spirit does not speak in the loud tones of that "clashing cymbal" known as our Ego, but in a quiet gentle whisper. Thus begins the way that we "make straight the Way of the Lord" and learn to do His will.

Transformation is a process that usually does not happen instantly but comes with consistent and persistent effort and willingness. As with any other process, it also comes with committed, enthusiastic practice and not just a half-hearted attempt.

Commit to setting aside a certain time in which you give God your undivided attention for at least one 15-minute period daily. During that time, give thanks to God, ask for His guidance, talk with Him, and then be still and listen. Joyfully rest in His Presence.... You will thirst for more, and He will pour his life-giving water upon you. Thanks be to God!



An Episcopal Visit

by: hieroschemamonk Barb and Mother Myrella

Words cannot adequately express how pleased we were that Bp. Charles and Fr. Rick could come to Massachusetts for a short visit with us. You might say it was a "meet and greet" visit since neither of us have had the opportunity to have a "face to face" visit with Bp. Charles or Fr. Rick since our acceptance as clergy and monastics within the Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church. Since Fr. Rick was getting ready to return to his home in Canada, Bp. Charles decided that it was time to make the long trip (13 hours driving time) east while he had an extra driver.

We had a chance to sit, talk, laugh, and pray together. Bishop Charles and Father Rick enjoyed a mini tour of the area, and we treated them "royally" -- not only as much respected fellow workers in God's Vineyard but as much loved friends! The visit was a way for all of us to put faces to the voices that we hear on the phone. It also gave us a chance to openly share our ideas and dreams for the Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church and the Eastern Rite Monastic movement within the Church.

We had a belated Pentecost celebration as we celebrated the Mass of Pentecost on May 26th. The presence of the Holy Spirit was overwhelming! Love, peace, and joy surrounded us....



(Mother Barb, Bp. Charles, Mother Myrella)



(Mother Barb, Fr. Rick, Mother Myrella)

We look forward to the time when we can make the trip to Cincinnati, OH to visit with Bp. Charles and the faithful of Our Lady of Peace Cathedral. It is wonderful to be a part of a Church that shows such love for everyone! God has richly blessed us

Thanks for taking the time to come to visit with us, Bp. Charles and Fr. Rick! We are already looking forward to having you here again and taking you to Bernie's for a very large prime rib lunch!!!! Maybe the next time the women will not beat the men in the amount of the prime rib eaten at one meal.

Prayer Requests

Mom LeClair
Br. Yosi and Jim
Bill and Trish
Linda and Wayne
Liz and Courtney
Carol and Leonard
Fr. David and family
Br. Damien and family
Fr. Rick Hobbs
Our Bishop -- +Charles Smith, OSF

Eastern Rite Monastics within Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church

Br. Damien Simmons (Riasaphor monastic)
Mother Myrella LeClair (Stavrophor monastic)
Mother Barbara Martzall (Schema-hegumen/abbess)

Newsletter is copyrighted by:

***Holy Theotokos of Mercy Community
for the
Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church***