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Solicitude

The Abbots' Letters of Reflection

Holding the Tension

Eye Witness News at 5:30! It is a small but far reaching snapshot of the world we live in today. Gratefully, Jeff Glor ends with a “feel good” story every evening. For a moment, it softens a bit of the angst I feel living in a world that can be cruel and merciless.

A provocative question was asked of me recently. What did I think was the legacy of the OOOW? For today, I know we make a difference. I witness the fruit of a group of wisdom seekers who live from a deeper consciousness in time/space. I sense the intentionality of choices that call for surrender of our ever-persistent agendas. I witness a deep desire to live by the teachings and wisdom of Jesus (Yeshua), in an attempt to embody what has been given. I see how we stumble, stand up and move courageously into the next “event” of living on the horizontal plane. The legacy of the Order rides on the legacy of our combined lives. If we are at a tipping point, and we seem to be, I put my heart on all of us helping our country, our world and our universe move forward. Each of us shines a light where there is darkness. LOVE matters!

May God bless my spiritual director; she understands my passion that shows up as anger. When I spill out my anguish at what I think has run amuck, she never fails to hold it all. And then, she invites me to surrender, and most of all, to Love. How many times has she quoted Fr. French, who has possibly been gone a very long time? Sr. Brigid tells me, often I am sorry to say, the story about him telling his students, “Sisters, you may not always like me, and I may not always like you (insert gasp from Sisters) but we MUST love one another.”

One of the participants in Rabbi Rami Shapiro’s Lenten E-Class responded to the daily lesson on finding the face of God wherever we turn. My condensed version of his comments starts with a monastery that had fallen on hard times. There were only four monks and the Abbot. They

didn't get along so well; being old and crotchety didn't help matters. Everything was in disrepair and on the verge of collapsing. Very few people took the path to visit anymore. In desperation, the Abbot visited the Rabbi and asked for advice. The Rabbi had none. However, he did tell the Abbot that he heard the Messiah resided at the monastery. The Abbot relayed this message to the monks upon his return. They all began to wonder which one of them was He. They started to treat one another and themselves differently. Not long after, a young man visited and finally asked to join the monks. Families once again wandered down the path to picnic on the grounds. They brought others with them and soon the monastery began to thrive.

Last Sunday was a beautiful balmy day, just the right temperature with no breeze. Our daughter, Monica, invited me to hike in Freiderich Wilderness. For a couple of hours, I moved away from distractions. I soaked up the warmth, breathed in the richness of wet leaves and the damp earth. I reveled in bird songs and laughter of children. I got to live in the space of a marvelous human being. We caught up on life and shared much laughter over how we get upended trying to live in our own skin. I sank deeply into what is REALLY IMPORTANT to me and I left refreshed and grounded once more.

So, I press on. Rami's commentary today said we are unique and at one at the same time. It is "imperative" (my words) to realize our own uniqueness from the rest while at the same time awaken to our unity with the rest. Ever a growing edge in my life.

Karen Poidevin, Abbot