

## November 2020



In a spirit of profound thanksgiving and abundant blessings, we would like to share the announcement of the first monastic profession of our brother Nhan. We are looking forward to beginning this new step in our monastic journey at the First Vespers of Advent, on Saturday, November 28th. We invite you to join us in personal prayer at home during the celebration.

There are three dimensions that are professed at that time. The first is stability.

In our community discussions, which we are having in this time leading to the profession, we all recognize that stability is essential. It would be a misconception to understand stability as leading to rigidity, but rather to flexibility. Brother Nhan talks of how the anchor of a ship allows it to weather out storms, even as the boat is now able to ride waves that might otherwise overwhelm the boat. His work on the shrimp boats down on the Louisiana coast gave him firsthand experience in such matters. Stability of heart allows us to weather out the storms.

With "Conversatio morum" we learn to continue talking to each other about the essential matters of our life. Brother Nhan shared how this dimension of our life is present to him as a gift. There is so much noise in our world that by sharing a life of silence and prayer we are able to talk to one another not from the busyness all around us, but from our heart. Benedict is very clear that we can get lost in a multitude of words but when we speak about what matters most to us we all grow together.

This leads us to obedience. The first word of the Rule is "Listen." We listen with the whole of our person to our heart, to each other, our world, and the Gospels. When we authentically listen our response will flow from the Spirit who lives in our hearts and guides us on our way. We live by consensus and know that even when we don't know the future or what it holds, at least, we will continue listening together and respond with one heart.

Our deepest hope is that this celebration will bring joy into all of our lives. We hope you will feel a part of this monastic commitment in your own way, in your own context, and that this too will give you strength to continue on your journeys. We are growing and changing, and our hearts are filled with gratitude for the abundance of life even as we truly miss being able to gather together in the Chapel for prayer.

