

With Thanksgiving to God

Surrounded as we are by so great a cloud of witnesses...

HEBREWS 12: 1

Each year, as the abundant green foliage of summer is transformed into the blazing red and gold of autumn, we are invited more deeply into the mystery of our humanity-its inevitable transitions, changes, endings and beginnings-lived within the Holy Mystery who is God. In the summer or autumn of our lives, these intimations of our mortality can lead us beyond fear and anxiety into a simple, unadorned trust in the One who has loved us first-and forever. We give thanks for four friends who died this past autumn, and whose lives were marked by this unadorned trust.

Jac Hart, husband of Muriel and father of eight daughters and sons, was known to many of you who have come to the priory for a time of refreshment. Jac and Muriel have for many years extended our monastic hospitality to guests at the House of Sabbath-and their kindness and warmth have touched the hearts of many persons. Jac died in early October. He bore his serious physical limitations with graciousness. The Barn Chapel was filled to capacity for the Memorial Service. Friends and family testified to a hard-won wisdom and serenity which enriched the lives of all of us.

Mary Coyne Keating, the sister of our Brother Columba, died in mid-October after a lengthy illness. Brothers joined her husband Paul, their sons, and family and friends for the Mass of the Resurrection in Waltham, Massachusetts. It seems that our community and the Keating family grew into adulthood side-by-side. We are left with the legacy of the love Paul and Mary had for each other, their deep Christian faith, and the witness of Paul's quiet, daily faithfulness in caring for Mary in the last years of her life.

June Hebert, the wife of Richard (Dick), and mother of Kenneth (formerly Brother Timothy), Richard, Lynn, Karen, and Todd, also died in mid-October. We are grateful for the friendship which we shared over many years, and that the priory became, in Dick's words, "their second home."

Mary Ellen Waters, wife of the late Richard Waters, M.D., and mother of ស្រីស្រីស្រីស្រីស្រីស្រី six daughters and sons, died in November after a lengthy struggle with various health problems. Dick and Mary Ellen were first introduced to Benedictine monastic life at Saint Anselm's Abbey in Washington, D.C. After moving to Hanover, New Hampshire, where Dick began practicing cardiology, Mary Ellen and Dick quickly became close friends of our community. They were especially supportive of our relationship with our Mexican Benedictine Sisters, and our outreach to Latin America. During her long struggle with infirmity and illness, Mary Ellen radiated the peace and confidence of a strong woman of faith. Her lasting testament will be the way she entrusted her whole life into the hands of the God with whom she was in love.

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