



*With great joy and simplicity of heart...  
the disciples remained faithful  
to the teaching of the apostles,  
to living a communal life  
and sharing with those in need,  
to the breaking of the bread  
and a spirit of prayer.*

- Acts 2:42-47

**FIFTY DAYS AFTER PASSOVER DURING THE JEWISH SPRING** harvest feast (Pentecost) the community of disciples gathered in Jesus' name experiencing an extraordinary fire of love and forgiveness that embraced them all. The many pilgrims who also came for the feast were so moved by the disciples' proclamation of the marvels of God and their new life in the Risen Jesus. What they heard and understood went far beyond the limitations of words and languages. It was the Spirit of God bringing them together, breathing new life into each and all. A new Pentecost was emerging — a springtime of new beginnings and deep hope.

In February, when visiting our Benedictine Sisters (Misioneras Guadalupanas) in Mexico, we gathered at the Guadalupe Center in Cuernavaca for dialogue and mutual support in our monastic life today. We were joined by two of our Trinitarian Sisters from Suesa in Spain, Sisters María Urquiza and María José Sotorrio; and with our Benedictine Sisters Patricia Henry and Maricarmen Bracamontes who came from their monastery, Pan de Vida (Bread of Life), in Torreón, northern Mexico. Also our Benedictine brother Simón Pedro Arnold joined us from the Andean monastery in Chucuito, Peru.

Our days together in Mexico were filled with a profound communion of heart, rooted in the words and experiences that we exchanged with one another, appreciating and transcending our cultural differences and tongues. We will share some of this experience with you through this bulletin both in our own words and through the thoughts and expressions of other brothers and sisters and friends who gift us with life and hope.

We have reprinted a beautiful mantra by Sister Maricarmen from Torreón. Its prayerful rhythm punctuated our gathering in Mexico.

Our brother Simón Pedro Arnold returned from Mexico with us to embark upon a well-deserved sabbatical; the first after more than 40 years living and serving among the Aymara indigenous of Peru. Through his

enclosed article he graciously brings us into some of the journey with his monastic community coming from Belgium to Peru's Andean Altiplano.

Speaking of the indigenous, during our exchange in Mexico we visited our friend Lucio Pérez and his family in Amatlán, a Nahuatl indigenous village outside of Cuernavaca. In the midst of the gracious hospitality of his home and community, Lucio inspired us with the ecological and conservation work they are doing to preserve their land in the spirit of their ancestors. He also shared with us the ancient yet farsighted wisdom of his people who have a tradition of consensus-gathering and gender-equality for the self-governance of their community.

Meeting again with our friends from the Women's Cooperative from La Nopalera, Mexico, it always amazes us how these women of humble background and resources reflect together so profoundly about the Gospel message. They genuinely put into practice their love for one another and service to their communities amidst such staggering challenges in their personal and familial lives. To Sofia, María, Rosa Bravo, Rosa Avilés, Guillermina, Ana María and Rufina, many thanks for your witness to the resurrection and the healing power of the Spirit in and through your lives.

At the beginning of March Sister Laura Bufano spent two months of her sabbatical with us as she concluded six years of congregational leadership among her Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. She shares a simple but profound poem/moment of "stopping."

On March 24<sup>th</sup> we marked the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the arrival of Felipe and Elena and their family from Guatemala. Three of their daughters, Alicia, Juanita and Maya, took the initiative to come to Weston to celebrate this anniversary with us as a sign of their family's gratitude for the years they lived in Sanctuary at our monastery. While Felipe and Elena, along with their older daughter, Sonia, and son, Julio, could not be with us in Weston, they wrote a beautiful reflection that we have enclosed about how they were remembering those days and years together.

We are also grateful for the outreach to persons leaving prison that Dismas of Vermont has offered here in Vermont over the years. We have invited Rita McCaffrey, who founded and worked hard to encourage the continuing growth of this significant and much needed form of hospitality, to tell about the latest house that is opening and being dedicated in these days.

The ordinary, simple gifts of each other, whether in a word of promise or a healing touch, in a stone or flower, a lizard or bird, in a piece of broiled fish with broken bread, all reveal the blessings of the Spirit's abiding presence. The fearful, dark emptiness of the tomb is transformed into an experience of forgiveness, communion and peace. We hear the invitation to risk all and return with Jesus to the beginning in order to walk anew the roads and hills of Galilee with those at the margins and on the periphery of church and society. Over and again our hearts are humbly astounded in joy, aflame with love and kindling an immense gratitude. ■