



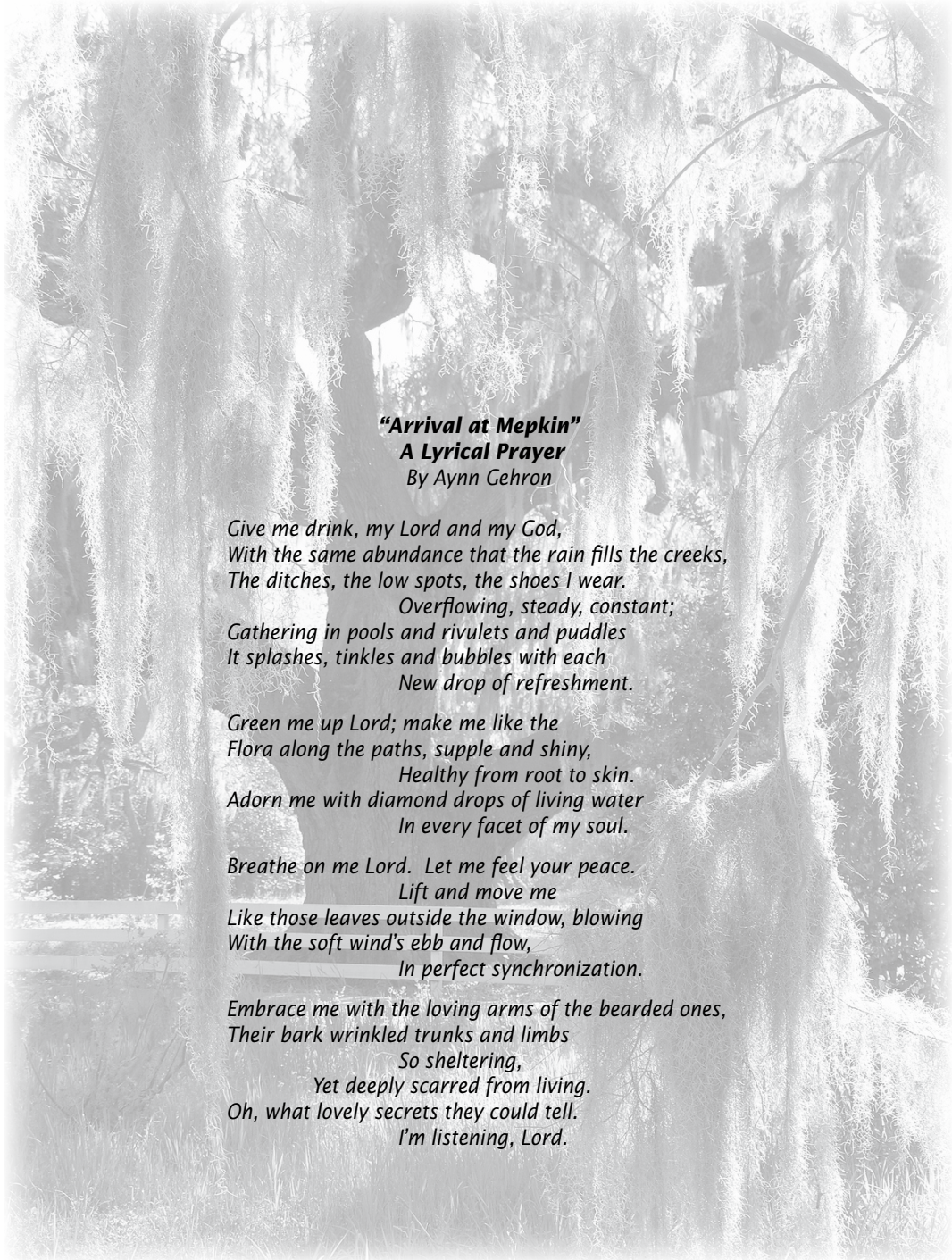
The Anchorage
A Contemplative Ministry

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

November 2008

Come away...



"Arrival at Mepkin"
A Lyrical Prayer
By Aynn Gehron

*Give me drink, my Lord and my God,
With the same abundance that the rain fills the creeks,
The ditches, the low spots, the shoes I wear.*

*Overflowing, steady, constant;
Gathering in pools and rivulets and puddles
It splashes, tinkles and bubbles with each
New drop of refreshment.*

*Green me up Lord; make me like the
Flora along the paths, supple and shiny,
Healthy from root to skin.
Adorn me with diamond drops of living water
In every facet of my soul.*

*Breathe on me Lord. Let me feel your peace.
Lift and move me
Like those leaves outside the window, blowing
With the soft wind's ebb and flow,
In perfect synchronization.*

*Embrace me with the loving arms of the bearded ones,
Their bark wrinkled trunks and limbs
So sheltering,
Yet deeply scarred from living.
Oh, what lovely secrets they could tell.
I'm listening, Lord.*



*anchor
deep*

“Action and Contemplation”

By Cathie Powell

Though it is common to juxtapose these words, it may be truer that they are “all of a piece.” When Richard Rohr, a Franciscan Priest, founded the Center for Action and Contemplation in NM, the programs offered were half action projects and half contemplative retreats. Now, years later, he offers many more contemplative events because as he says, “One cannot really look at life and society from an ego-less position except through the lens of prayer, particularly the emptying form of prayer that we call contemplation.” Rohr’s “Gospel Call for Compassionate Action” depends on “a contemplative stance” toward life because that provides the grounding from which our action flows. The action that flows from that deep place within already has the resources needed: energy, funds, people, because God provides from abundance beyond our imaginings just what we need to carry out the action begun by God in quiet.

Once we have taken time to become still within and without, we can hear the still, small voice; we can sense God’s leading in the sheer silence that is both empty and full. (More about this next issue.) You may recall in *The Interior Castle* by Teresa of Avila, a spunky 16th century, Spanish mystic, that from the delight of the 7th mansion, that deepest place full of God’s light and love, we are thrown back into the world to serve God and God’s people, with God’s love.

With this in mind, we are encouraged to offer contemplative retreats: space to listen, to discern, to be open and available to hear God. This One who knows us and loves us, and also knows the world’s needs and our gifts, can prepare us for service as only God can do. To God be the glory.

“Looking for a Mary Heart”

by Cathie Powell

We are looking for a “Mary Heart” to serve as our Administrative Assistant, working about 10 hours a week. The “Mary Heart” phrase comes from a book by Joanna Weaver, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*.

The deeper, truer point from the Gospel passage (Luke 10:38-42) about Jesus visiting Mary and Martha, may be missed by some, as it is often interpreted that it is better to sit with Jesus than to work. The key word, it seems to me, is that Martha was distracted. My guess is that Mary usually worked hard too, but at least this time she was not as distracted as her sister. Mary noticed the look on Jesus’ face, as He was on His way to Jerusalem, and sensed it would be good to be with Him. It was a gift to Jesus and to Mary, but Martha missed it this time because she was distracted. Mary was present to the moment, to Jesus. She was paying attention, wanting to see what His needs were.

We hope to find a “Mary Heart” person, who is paying attention to God in the present moment, and is willing to live and work out of that mindset. Someone who has an open and available heart for God and God’s people – listening for whatever it is that is important in this moment. It would also be great to be creative with computers.

Here’s an update on another new initiative: our Clergy Quiet Day Series is off to a graced start with reports of a strong sense of God’s presence. Several signed up for all 5 Quiet Days after the first one, not wanting to miss any! Please pray for these dear clergy, men and women, as they honor what is most important in serving God and God’s people: listening for God, and then letting their action flow from their contemplative stance.

(Thanks to Aynn Gehron for the prayer on the cover and for her participation with The Anchorage over the years. She went with us for our first ever 7-day Directed Retreat at Mepkin Abbey and birthed this prayer.)



The Anchorage

Vision

For all people everywhere to see God more clearly, love God more dearly and follow God more nearly. For when just one person moves toward living out of that graced space, where we know we are loved, there is a ripple effect which is our best hope for the healing of our world. The Anchorage wants to contribute to that hope.

Mission

The Anchorage provides a setting in which women and men may come away to be with God, as revealed in Jesus the Christ; and to come to love more deeply, through contemplative retreats, book studies, and spiritual direction, this God who loves us beyond measure.

Metaphor

A safe harbor in which to anchor deep in still waters as a respite from the wind and waves; where pilgrims may enjoy prayerful grace, honor the rhythm of Sabbath and open more fully to the mystery of God’s love.

Servant Leaders

Francina Bardsley
Barbara Borom
Mike Flanagan, Chair
Margaret Hardy
Donna Meyer
Robert Miles
Carroll Page
Cathie Powell, Exec. Dir.

The Anchorage

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“Mary was present to the moment, to Jesus.”

“Thomas Merton’s Message for Our Day”

By E. Glenn Hinson

In 1960 I took the first group of students I taught church history to the Abbey of Gethsemani. I didn’t take them to meet Thomas Merton, about whom I knew almost nothing. I wanted to expose them to the Middle Ages. And they were. Gethsemani was much more primitive in those days than it is today. Merton was our bonus.

After we made a tour of the monastery Merton talked to us about monasticism. When he finished, he asked if we had any questions. One student asked what I feared someone would ask: “What is a smart fellow like you doing in a place like this?” I waited for Merton to open his mouth and eat this guy alive. But he didn’t. He just grinned and then said something that bowled me over. “I am here because I believe in prayer. That is my vocation.”

**“I am here
because I believe
in prayer. That is
my vocation.”**

You could have knocked me over with a feather. I had never met anyone who believed in prayer enough to think of it as a vocation. All the way back to the seminary that day those words kept drumming in my head along with the Protestant rubric, “God has no hands but our hands, no feet but our feet, no voice but our voice.” I found myself thinking, “If God has no

hands but our hands, etc.” our world has to be in a desperate condition, and I began to think that Merton might be onto something we needed to hear.

It took a long time for me to discover what that something was, for I didn’t seriously delve into Merton’s writings until after his premature death in Bangkok on December 10, 1968. But I know now that he was trying to awaken the rest of us in our activity-obsessed culture to the importance of what he and generation after generation of monks devoted their lives to, namely, contemplation. Our culture, he insisted, leaves no place in it to seek Wisdom for its own sake, to seek the Ground of Being, to seek God. The consequences of that are dire. “He [or she] who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening his [or her] own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others. He [or she] will communicate to them nothing but the contagion of his [or her] own obsessions, his [or her] aggressiveness, his [or her] ego-centered ambitions, his [or her] delusions about ends and means, his [or her] doctrinaire prejudices and ideas.” Thence, he concluded, “Far from being irrelevant, prayer, meditation and contemplation are of the utmost importance in America today.”¹

The question you and I must answer is: What are we doing to practice and to foster contemplation in this world of action? We don’t live in monasteries, contemplation’s usual locus. Can we find ways to do it where we are? Merton thought we could. He said that “in a broader sense every life can be dedicated to some extent to contemplation, and even the most active of lives can and should be balanced by a contemplative element—leavened by the peace and order and clarity that can be provided by meditation, interior prayer, and the deep penetration of the most fundamental truths of human existence.”² I dare you to prove him right.

(Thanks to Glenn Hinson for this article, for serving on The Anchorage Advisory Board and for leading our 10th Anniversary Retreat this month.)

¹Thomas Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co, Inc, 1971), 164.

²Thomas Merton, “The Contemplative Life: Its Meaning and Necessity,” *The Dublin Review*, 223 (Winter 1949), 27.



Upcoming Events

Nov., 2008 – June, 2009

Nov. 14, Friday, 9:30 – 3:30
“Fall Quiet Day: Resting in the Way of Love” led by Francina Bardsley (space for 4 more)

10th Anniversary Event!
Nov. 21, Friday – Nov. 23, Sunday “Thomas Merton, My Brother: The Impact of Thomas Merton on My Life and Thought” led by Glenn Hinson. Kanuga, Hendersonville, NC (space for 4 more)

Dec. 4, Thursday, 6:30 – 9pm
“Making Room in the Inn (XII): an Advent Retreat” on Comfort and Joy led by Cathie Powell

Dec. 12, Fri., 9:30 – 3:30
Clergy Quiet Day Series (2) led by Cathie Powell

Jan. 25 – 27, “Beach Retreat: Discernment and Dreams ” at the Litchfield Inn, Pawleys Island, SC, led by Caroline Smith (waiting list)

Jan. 27 – 29, Sun. – Tues., “Praying the Hours” at the beach, led by Cathie Powell

Feb. 10, Tues., 9:30 – 3:30
“Money as Enemy and Friend of God” led by Robert Miles and Camp Wynn

Feb. 13, Fri., 9:30 – 3:30
Clergy Quiet Day Series (3) led by Mike Flanagan

Mar. 3 – 24, Tues., 7 – 9pm
Lenten Prayerful Book Study, *Into the Silent Land: A Guide to the Christian Practice of Contemplation* (Plan to attend all 4 sessions if possible.) Led by Cathie Powell

Unless otherwise noted all events are held at **The Anchorage**.

If \$10 is all you can pay, then that is all you pay! It’s not about the money.

To reserve your space, send \$10 payable to The Anchorage.



The Anchorage

A Contemplative Ministry

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*“For God alone my soul
waits in silence, for my
hope is in Him.”*

Psalm 62:5

“Thoughts on Contemplation”

“Contemplation is the way out of the great self-centered psychodrama. When interior silence is discovered, compassion flows.”

*Martin Laird
(see Upcoming Events, Lenten Book Study)*

“This prayer is an attentive, watchful listening, of ‘the heart.’ The response such prayer calls forth is not usually one of jubilation or audible witness: it is a wordless and total surrender of the heart in silence.” Thomas Merton



“The place to begin, I believe, is with contemplation.

Until we begin to rediscover ourselves in relationship with the Self, God, to restore our relation to the ground of being, there is little hope that we can reassess our activities and begin to pour meaning into them.”

Glenn Hinson

*“Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” Jesus
(John 12:24)*

Financial Status as of October 31, 2008

(Fiscal Year is July 08 - June 09)

Total gifts hoped for	\$ 35,500
Received FGA*	\$ 13,013
Other gifts received	\$ 908
Balance needed	\$21,579

Total income budgeted	\$ 63,380
Total received	\$ 23,536
Balance needed	\$39,844

**From God's Abundance*

**Thank you donors
and participants!**

Update on FGA Progress (2008-2011)

3-year Goal:	\$153,700
Pledged:	132,920
Remaining:	\$ 20,780

We invite you to prayerfully consider a 3-year pledge of any amount - as God leads you.

Please also pray with us as we are in the negotiating phase for our new office/program space, hoping to move in soon.