

From the Heights: Monastic Musings from the Mountains

Pentecost 2014

Volume II, Issue No. 5

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire; enlighten with celestial fire!

In this Issue:



Pentecost, Duccio di Buoninsegna, Italy, c. 1310

<i>Come, Holy Ghost</i>	1
<i>Second Annual Pilgrimage</i>	2
<i>First Annual Oblate Retreat</i>	2
<i>From the Holy Rule</i>	2
<i>News and Events</i>	3
<i>Come away...</i>	3

C o m e , H o l y G h o s t !
In hymns and prayers at this time of year, we hear this plea over and over again. But do we mean by it? Do we really want to be filled with the Spirit that turned the cowering, fearful fishermen into bold preachers of the Gospel, even unto torture and death? Or do we wish, merely, to be comforted and free of the Christian struggle?

We think of the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter,” the “Advocate,” the bringer of joy, peace, and light. This is all true—and for that God be praised!

Less often, perhaps, do we think about the truth that we need a comforter (i.e., a strengthener) because we are weak; less often do we truly perceive our need for an advocate to speak up for us when we are at a loss for words; still less of-

ten are we likely to experience the joy of the Spirit while in the midst of sorrows, the peace of the Spirit while overwhelmed with turmoil, the light of the Spirit while the darkness of this mortal life has seemingly overwhelmed us and obscured our awareness of God’s love.

But these are the very times for which the Lord sent the Spirit upon the disciples and, through Baptism and Chrismation, upon us, their children and heirs.

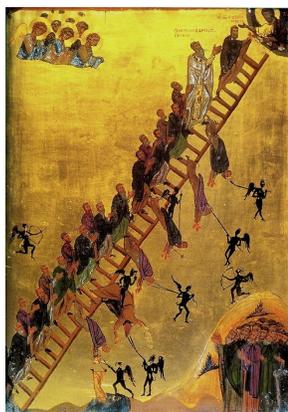
Let us cry out for the presence of the Spirit on this Feast, and on every day of our lives; let us open ourselves to the living Power that turned the world upside down; and let us go where the Spirit—who, like the wind, blows where it will—chooses to lead us: speaking God’s Truth and ministering God’s love with confidence and strength.

From the Holy Rule

...if we wish to attain to the highest summit of humility, and speedily reach that heavenly exaltation, which is won through the lowliness of this present life, then by our ascending actions a ladder must be set up, such as appeared in sleep to Jacob, and on which he saw angels descending and ascending (cf Gen 28:12). Without a doubt, the descent and ascent signifies precisely this: that by exalting ourselves, we descend; but by humbling ourselves, we ascend.

The ladder thus erected is our life in this world, which through humility of heart is lifted up by our Lord to heaven. The sides of this ladder we understand to be our body and our soul, in which the divine call has placed various rungs of humility and discipline, upon which we must ascend.

— Chapter 7.2



Second Annual Pilgrimage for the Feast of Saint Laurence



His Grace Bishop John
of Worcester and New England,
Vicar Bishop for the Western Rite

The Benedictine Fellowship of Saint Laurence and the Commu-

nity of Our Lady and Saint Laurence are pleased to announce the upcoming Annual Pilgrimage to the Saint Laurence Center, August 8 — 10, 2014.

All are welcome!

His Grace Bishop John will give two presentations on August 9th and will preach at the Solemn Mass on August 10th.

There is no charge for attendance at the pilgrimage; however, those

wishing to stay overnight *must* make advance reservations as space is limited. Most rooms will be double occupancy.

Donations and assistance with meals would be sincerely appreciated. For reservations or more information, contact the Prior, Father Theodore: colsl@saintlaurenceosb.org

A full schedule is available on our web site and will be published in the next issue of *From the Heights*.

First Annual Oblates' Retreat

From the morning of August 11th through the afternoon of August 15th, we will host our first annual retreat for *Benedictine Oblates*.

The retreat is open to Oblates of the Community of Our Lady and Saint Laurence, and to oblates of other monastic communities, including non-Orthodox communities. It is also open to individuals interested in exploring Benedictine oblation.

There is no charge for those who are Oblates,

but advance reservations are required. Donations will be happily accepted.

Included in the retreat will be participation in the daily round of monastic services and meals, presentations and discussions on aspects of Benedictine life, and a share in manual labor. Participants are encouraged to participate in the Annual Pilgrimage that begins immediately following the Retreat.

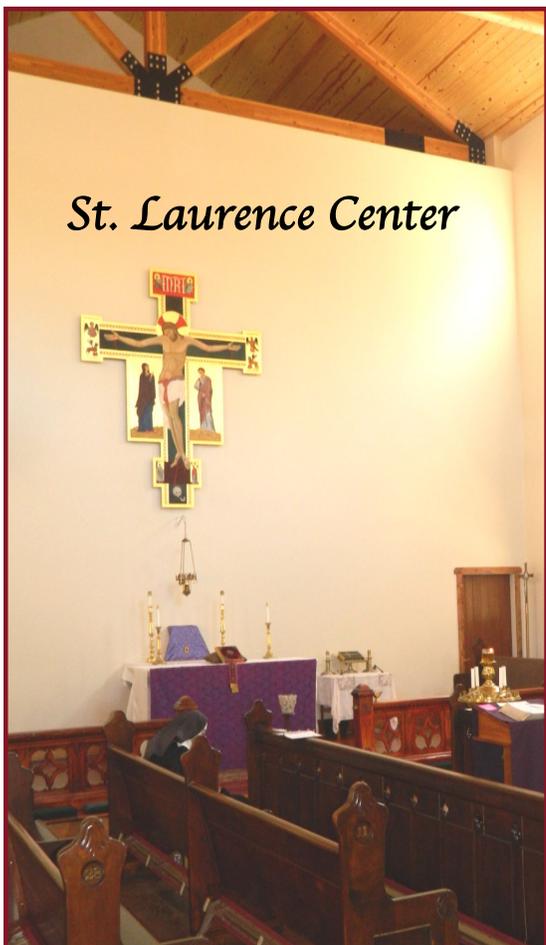
For reservations or information, contact the Prior, Father Theodore:

colsl@saintlaurenceosb.org

A full schedule will be published soon.

Benedictine Oblates are clergy, laymen, or laywomen — married or single — who chose to embrace appropriate portions of the *Rule* of St Benedict in affiliation with a particular monastery. Affiliation with our Community is open to Orthodox Christians of both the Western and Eastern traditions.

News and Events



St. Laurence Center



- **May 8—24: Anna (Marci) Burr**, Mother Sophia's sister, spent two weeks with us for spiritual renewal and monastic fellowship. She is a member of Holy Resurrection Antiochian Orthodox Church, Tucson, AZ. Sadly, after arriving, she came down with a cold. Still, there were ample opportunities for worship and discussion of monastic spirituality and praxis.
- **May 12—14:** We were blessed by the visit of four clergy to assist in our celebration of the spring **Feast of Our Lady of Glastonbury**: Fr. Lester Michael Bundy, Obl.SB, who served the Sacred Liturgy for the Feast; Fr George Dokos of Ss Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church, Boulder; Hieromonk Philip (Vreeland) of the Monastic Brotherhood of St. Silouan the Athonite; and Deacon Stephan #####, retired, who lives in Gunnison, CO.
- **June:** One of **Father Giovanni's** paintings will be featured on the cover of *Colorado Central Magazine*, a local periodical with a circulation of approximately 1,200. Father's photograph, along with a brief biography and information on our Community will be included. Check them out at www.cozine.com
- **June 1—8: Mother Sophia** is visiting her good friend Mother Nektaria at St Paul Skete, Memphis, TN. She will return on Pentecost evening.
- **June 8, Pentecost:** Father Theodore will be the preacher at the 10:00 a.m. Sung Mass at St Augustine's, Denver.

Come away to a quiet place ... and rest awhile" (Mk6:31)

"Lo, the winter is past..." and the trees and fields are green, the air is sweet, and the creek is flowing. It is a wonderful time to come away to our Tallahassee Creek campus and seek God in the silence, solitude, and prayerful atmosphere of Benedictine life and worship.

Consider a personal retreat with us this summer, or organize a small group to come pray, work,

and study together at one of the few Orthodox monastic communities in the Rocky Mountains.

Whether you are seeking guidance or time to sort out transitions in your life, or just need some quiet "down" time, we look forward to welcoming you!

Father Theodore
guestmaster@saintlaurenceosb.org

Community of Our Lady and Saint Laurence

The **Benedictine Fellowship of Saint Laurence** is an independent, non-profit corporation established for religious and charitable purposes. All donations are tax deductible. The Fellowship was founded to promote monastic life and spiritual renewal and worship according to the traditions of Orthodox Catholic Christianity, under the inspiration of the *Rule of Saint Benedict*. In order to further this ministry, the Fellowship operates a retreat center where people can seek renewal through combining worship, contemplation, and work. The **Community of Our Lady and Saint Laurence** is an *unofficial community-in-formation* of Western Orthodox monastics, following the ancient *Rule of St. Benedict*. We live and work at the Retreat Center operated by the Fellowship in the Colorado Rocky Mountains. While we are, individually, affiliated with the Antiochian Orthodox Western Rite Vicariate, as an organization we are not, at present, a canonically erected monastic community of any Orthodox jurisdiction. We endeavor to support ourselves with regard to food, medical care, transportation, and personal needs through our work for the Fellowship and through other crafts or services, and through donations from the faithful.

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Visit us on the Web:

www.saintlaurenceosb.org

*Seeking and Serving
God in the Way of
St. Benedict*