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Desert House of Prayer

Contemplation and The Power of Love

There is a simple way to live. It requires a new way of being in the world. It requires being in love without fear. Love frees us to be in the world with play and creativity. Love enables us to embrace what is possible and let go of what is impossible. Love empowers us to welcome the unexpected, to learn and to celebrate what is best about us. Love enables us to embrace our humanity with transparency and vulnerability. When we know love we do not have to be perfect. We are able to be surprised by new possibility that emerges out of failure.

Love is a simple way of living. Love is attracted to love and love orders life. Love frees us to ask questions, explore and wander into new relationships and new possibilities. Love organizes chaos into life-giving energy and new structures. Margaret Wheatley suggests “we can create, experiment, organize, fail, accomplish, play, learn, create again.” Love invites us to freedom, creativity and meaning that affirms our humanity. We human beings are the most striking realization of the basic law of love. Love is a simple way: **to live without fear**. Who we are and what is best about us radiate with new energy – divine energy. We are constantly resurrecting to something new. Love is a simple powerful way always moving towards new life.

DESERT HOUSE OF PRAYER NEWS

We are happy to report that 2015-2016 retreat year is moving ahead with a constant occupancy rate but slightly lower than last year. This year there have been more cancellations than usual but we have been able to fill the cancellations with people on our waiting list and with new “in the moment” enquiries. From August 2015 through January 2016 we had 1189 bed-nights, the third highest for the first six months in thirteen years. We are grateful to DHOP volunteer, **Dr. Charles Miller**, who keeps track of our numbers and statistics.

In September **Bro. Bill Coughley** had his second hernia operation in two years. We have been monitoring his workload so that he receives more help with the heavy lifting. Building # 2 has been a headache for Bro. Bill this winter. Water heater, pipe and sliding door replacements have topped his list of unexpected breakdowns without his having his own!!

We welcome **Ron Devlin** to our DHOP kitchen staff. Ron is our new weekend chef using his culinary skills on Sunday, Monday and Thursday of each week. **Chris Russell** continues as our principal chef and procurement officer for food and kitchen supplies.

DHOP welcomes our new bookkeeper, **Ms. Josephine Balboa**. Before coming out of retirement to help us, Josie worked for the Tucson Unified School District as an Office Manager for 15 years. In addition to working part time at DHOP Josie enjoys being a grandmother.

We wish to thank **Ms. Jacquie Wiegand** for managing the DHOP bookkeeping department for the last two years. Jacquie is looking forward to traveling with her husband **Lon** and being a grandmother.

In March and June, 2016, **Fr. David Louch** will be preaching and assisting with directed retreats for the **Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament** in Victoria, Texas. In April he will be assisting the **Canadian Redemptorists** in St. Anne de Beaupre, Quebec with regards to creating a “New Redemptorist Entity and Presence” in Canada. In July Fr. David will go to Rome to take a course in Redemptorist Spirituality. The course includes following the “footsteps” of **St. Alphonsus Liguori**, the founder of the

Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers, to the places in southern Italy that had an important place in the early history of the institute: Scala, Pagani, Cirioni, Mater Domini

DHOP Death Notices

The father of **Michael Gibson, The Rev. Charles W. Gibson**, passed away in January in Richmond, Virginia. Rev. Gibson served as a pastor and interim minister in the Baptist Church for 65 years. We continue to offer Michael and his family our prayers and condolences as they mourn and memorialize his life.

DHOP has also lost a good friend, desert companion and frequent retreat guest when **Schrine Persad** of Toronto, ON suddenly passed away in October just days after her 60th birthday. Schrine left behind her husband, mother, two sisters and a brother. Our prayers and condolences go out to her family.

Rev. Evy McDonald a retired Methodist Minister, Desert Companion and Volunteer at DHOP, lost her mother, **Donna McDonald**, who unexpectedly passed away during an extended stay with Evy in January. Our prayers and condolences go out to Evy and the McDonald family.

In September **Peter James Farrell (P.J.)**, the grandson of Desert Companion and Music Volunteer **Francesca Moulinier**, was tragically killed in a one car collision in Tucson. When the accident occurred PJ was on his way to St. Pius X Church to help with a youth fund raising planning meeting. Peter graduated from Salpointe Catholic High School in May, 2015 and was attending Pima Community College. Our prayers and condolences go out to Francesca and the Farrell family.

Current Needs

This summer DHOP will receive another thorough deep cleaning. At the present time we are accepting bids for water pipe replacement in the laundry and all of the bathrooms in building #2. We will continue to try to replace the water cooling units with air conditioning/heat pump units in Paul & Joseph Hermitages as funding allows after all of the other necessary repairs are complete.

The Redemptorist Denver Province has asked DHOP to plan a capital campaign to ensure the future viability of Desert House Prayer. There are many preliminary issues that need to be vetted before the campaign begins. We would like to have a master plan for the building and personnel needs of DHOP as the center piece of the capital campaign.

The income we receive from retreat guests covers only a portion of our ongoing operating expenses. We invite you to remember Desert House of Prayer with a gift in your estate planning. More information about how to do so is available by contacting Rev. Thomas Picton, C.Ss.R. at deserthop@live.com. Other gifts can be made by means of the enclosed envelope or through PayPal on the donations page of our website: www.deserthouseofprayer.org.

Final Thought

John Welwood in his book **Journey of the Heart** reminds us *that love is profound because it roots us in the earth. The profound question that love proposes is, "Can you face life as it is; can you look at all the pain and darkness as well as the power and light in the human soul, and still say yes?"* In the Resurrection God says 'yes' to humanity and to all of creation. What is our response?



Rev. Thomas Picton, C.Ss.R., Desert House of Prayer Director