



Queen of Peace Monastery



*“My house shall be called
a house of prayer for all
peoples.”
+ Is 56:7*



Dear friends,

Ten years ago, our beautiful monastery was opened and dedicated by Archbishop Michael Miller, CSB. In this newsletter we offer you a glimpse into how the community has evolved over these last ten years in the Upper Squamish Valley, with the help of so many friends and guided by the Holy Spirit.

The Indigenous word Squamish, when translated into English, means ‘mother of the wind’. The city of Squamish is located on the northern tip of a fjord (Átl’ka7tsem or Howe Sound). Here, the steep-sided Mainland shores funnel thermal winds into the Squamish Estuary, making it a place where people hold on to their hats (and veils).

In Sacred Scripture, wind is a sign or symbol of the Holy Spirit. In the beginning, when the world was created, *“darkness covered the face of the deep while a wind from God swept over the water”* (Gen 1:2). At the beginning of the Church with Pentecost, a wind was heard throughout the house and all were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). Jesus, when referring to the Holy Spirit, says *“the wind blows where it chooses. You hear the sound of it but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going”* (Jn 3:8).

Every spring, from the feast of the Ascension to the day of Pentecost, our community of Queen of Peace takes a time of silent retreat. With Mary and the Apostles who withdrew to the ‘Upper Room’ in prayer, we wait for a new outpouring of the Spirit. We invite you to join us in praying *‘Veni Sancte Spiritus’ — Come Holy Spirit —* while carrying in our hearts all the urgent needs of our beloved and broken world. As we pray with one mind and heart, let us get ready to hold on to our hats, for the wind of the Spirit will surely blow. Yes, let us ask God to send forth His Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

God bless,

Your sisters at Queen of Peace Monastery



2012

Blessing of the cells by Archbishop Miller during the Dedication



Beginning the icon studio

2013



2014

Rebuilding the driveway...



...which soon weathered its first flood



New Psalters for new choir stalls

2015



Continuing to build relationships with our nearest "neighbours"



2017

Filming for *This Mountain Life* documentary



Construction begins for our micro-hydroelectricity project, completed in 2021

2018



2019

Paschal Vigil



2020

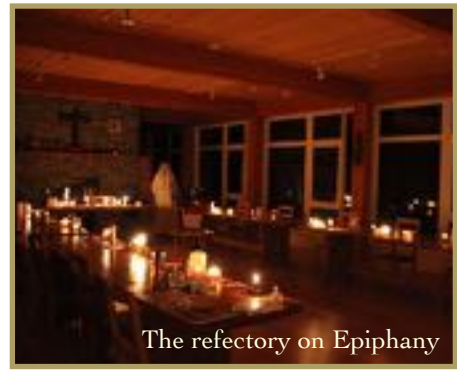
Welcoming new members



2021

Installing permanent wildfire protection for our chapel & buildings

Tenth Anniversary of Dedication
In our novitiate, we have a saying: "It takes ten years." Ten years to become fully rooted in the monastic life; to find one's marks and points of reference in seasons both wet and dry; and to truly be at home in this new place. For this reason (and many others) it is our joy this summer to celebrate the tenth anniversary of our monastery at the base of Cloudburst Mountain, which was dedicated to God on the Feast of St. Dominic (August 8) in 2012. Thank-you to all our friends and benefactors who have walked with us along the way; we hope that you too enjoy these excerpts from the journey. As Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati would say, "*Verso l'alto*" (to the heights) for the next decade to come!



Chronicles of Queen of Peace

November: Liturgically, our month began with the First Vespers of the Feast of All Saints, which also happened to mark the end of a prioral term. During the following week of prioral vacancy, the Holy Spirit reminded us of his loving protection over our community with the first bald eagle sightings of the season. On November 8, Sr. Claire Marie of Jesus was re-elected for a second prioral term. In between, on November 6, the Dominican Family in Vancouver celebrated the *Dies Natalis* of St. Dominic with an online video presentation. Our sisters contributed from afar with poetry, a video on the history of the nuns of the Order of Preachers, and a technical hand in formatting the contributions.

Inspired by the custom of some of our monasteries in France, we have long thought of creating sturdy blue work habits for cooking, cleaning and other messy indoor jobs. From November 9 - 12, Liz Rolf (Sr. Claire's sister-in-law) came to help Sr. Isabelle and Sr. Laetitia Maria with the task. They set to work drafting, cutting and sewing these for us out of a lightweight blue denim, and by the end of the week several bluebird habits were finished or underway. We still wear our aprons in the kitchen, but our actual white habits have never been so safe from tomato sauce, turmeric and olive oil.

As our monastery has grown in numbers, we have had to become creative in finding places to operate our increasing number of workshops. Right now, we have the candle shop in a former parlour, the herb department next to the subprioress's desk, papermaking in a novitiate bathroom, and the soap shop in what was supposed to be an exercise room. None of these areas have proper ventilation, and the soap department relocates to the laundry every time they need running water. With the help of benefactors, we have finally begun constructing a new building to accommodate these work areas properly, with safer and more practical working conditions. On November 17, two concrete trucks and a hose crane arrived to pour the concrete foundations, and a few sisters got to try their hands at levelling. Just in time, too, as the first snow arrived on Valley floor the very next day!

On Christ the King, we welcomed Mica Paez to begin her year of postulancy. Raised on the prairies in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, she is adapting well to our mountain peaks. Right now, she is helping Sr. Mary Magdalen with icon mounting, outdoor maintenance and pottery. Meanwhile, our other postulant Mariel has become adept at soap making, and is cheerfully whipping up quadruple batches of the olive-oil based bars.

December: Advent began with the debut of new proper Alleluias and antiphons for each of the four Sundays. Written by our French confrere André Gouzes O.P., each one is for three voices, with the first intonation and antiphon led by a small schola. It was our joy to learn this new enrichment for our liturgy. The second week of Advent marked our community's annual retreat, preached by fr. Prakash Lohale, O.P. on our baptismal identity as children of God. A member of the Dominican Province of India, and the former socius of the Master for Apostolic Life, fr. Prakash currently ministers as the director of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs Office of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto.

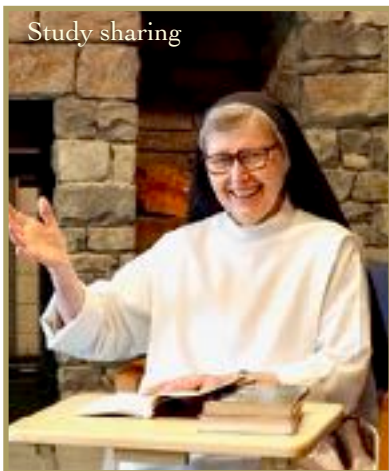
On December 17 the "O" Antiphons began, and on December 18 we awoke to find 60 centimetres (two feet) of snow which had gently fallen overnight. It was beautiful to see the trees and fields coated in sparkling white. Unfortunately, that same day we were expecting the arrival of both an aspirant and the last delivery of groceries before the Christmas holidays. With the help of a neighbour, we dug out our driveway and made the trip to town—only to arrive home to a power outage, and more snow! With our truck unable to make the final ascent up the driveway to the kitchen door, we towed the groceries up on toboggans in the dark. As the snow kept falling from Christmas to Epiphany, this scene would be repeated many more times, reminding some sisters of the mountaineering that is so much a part of the local culture.

To our joy (and great surprise) we had a few brave guests for the Masses of Christmas Eve and Day. This was the first Christmas in two years where our liturgy has been open to the public, with relatively few pandemic restrictions. It was an especially beautiful celebration. The very next day, the low temperatures froze the pipes in our chaplain house and the (much larger) pipes in our micro-hydroelectricity system. We began to shovel out, but the snow continued to fall, blocking our access to the main road beneath a solid layer of ice.

January: On the feast of the Mother of God, fr. Chrysostom Mijinke O.P. arrived for a short retreat. Originally from Langley B.C., he is a recently ordained priest of the Western Dominican Province currently stationed in Seattle. He graciously seasoned his *ora* with *labora* by offering to help us shovel snow and haul diesel for the generator, performing the first task in full cappa (and toque). Thank-you, fr. Chrysostom!

We celebrated the close of the 800 Jubilee of the *Dies Natalis* of St. Dominic on January 6 with a special Mass, and by contributing to an online video presentation organized by the Dominican Family in Canada. It was a joy to pray Epiphany Vespers together, united as a province and vicariates. On January 11, for the first time in three weeks, our truck made it up the driveway hill, delivering groceries from store to kitchen door. After this, there were no more heavy snows or power outages. However, our hydroelectricity system was still frozen. On January 24, two sisters hiked up the mountain to shovel snow off the frozen sections of pipe, in the hopes of encouraging a thaw. While there, by a happy coincidence, our volunteer hydroelectric coordinator Peter Talbot arrived. Under his direction, our sisters treated the blocked section with a blowtorch and small mallet. After a few hours of very wet and cold work, their lips were blue, but the water was moving again. The next day, the system was back to normal operation, to much rejoicing (particularly on the part of our bursar).

February: We celebrated the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2 with the annual blessing of our chapel candles, and the procession to begin the Eucharist. On February 16, spring was in the air—literally—with the appearance of the season's first hummingbird and butterfly. From February 23 – 26, our community experimented with the new idea of a week of study sharing. During our usual afternoon work period, we gathered in the community room and two sisters per day gave short presentations on what they had been studying recently, followed by questions and community discussion. Sisters presented on topics including fr. Yves Congar O.P.'s understanding of tradition, Abraham's journey of faith in Genesis, and a visual tour of the history of church architecture in Europe. It was a very enjoyable and interesting experience for all of us, and a new way to grow closer together as a community.



Easter Vigil

March: Lent began with the sobering news of war in Eastern Europe. In response to the appeal of Pope Francis, we offered Ash Wednesday as a day of prayer and fasting for the Ukraine. We continue to hold in prayer all those affected by the fighting, both in our intercessions at the Divine Office, and in the prayer that suffuses our daily contemplative life. As the Holy Father wrote in his homily, *“Prayer, charity and fasting are not medicines meant only for ourselves but for everyone: they can change history. First, because those who experience their effects almost unconsciously pass them on to others; but above all, because prayer, charity and fasting are the principal ways for God to intervene in our lives and in the world. They are weapons of the spirit and, with them...we implore from God that peace which men and women are incapable of building by themselves.”* In a particular way, we also remember the Dominican friars, sisters and laity of the Ukraine and Poland, who are serving as much as they can with humanitarian and spiritual aid.

From March 4 - 6, the high school seminarians and three monks from Westminster Abbey arrived for a weekend of work. Filled with energy and goodwill, they dug ditches, moved boulders, sifted compost, hauled hay, filled the barn with firewood, and still had a bit of enthusiasm left over for the occasional errant snowball. On Saturday night, some sisters participated in a question and answer session with the boys and monks. As the inquiries unfolded, the sisters who had cooked the group’s Saturday noon meal were treated with a delightful surprise: there was leftover chili. In the ongoing game of nuns vs. teenage boys’ appetites, this was no small victory!

After their departure, our study “week” continued with sharings by sisters who had not yet presented in February. Signs of the coming spring appeared in the monastery basement and windowsills, with seedlings positioned near any reasonably available source of light. Thomas Schneider, a local organic farmer, helped us to set up greenhouse frames near our main garden. With the ongoing supply chain issues caused by the pandemic, we are appreciating more than ever the value of growing our own food. The month finished with our welcoming of Br. Philip Neri Gerlomes, O.P., a student of the Western Dominican Province. He currently serves at the university Newman Centre in Seattle, and had time for a brief retreat over the university’s spring break.

April: On April 4, we received a visit from Ana Maria Silva and Patricia Ballard of the Epiphany Sacred Arts Guild in Vancouver, along Dr. Azelina Flint, a visiting professor from England. It was an opportunity to listen and share about various forms of art, including iconography and calligraphy, and was a wonderful encouragement to us all.

As the psalmist wrote, *“even the sparrow has found a home...beneath your altars O Lord”* (Ps. 84). Our Holy Week began with a concrete illustration of this, as a chickadee followed our Palm Sunday procession into the chapel and tried to take refuge next to the tabernacle. Sr. Claire gently carried the little bird back outside, and the celebration proceeded as normal. As with Christmas, we were very glad to be able to welcome the public to our liturgy for the Triduum, with the chapel well filled for Passion Friday and Easter Sunday. It was a joy to celebrate together in person once more, and to share our hope in receiving the Resurrection.

In closing, just a bit of housekeeping: unless the pandemic restrictions change again, our physical gift shop is now open for visitors. We now accept payment via e-transfers as well as cash. Our website’s gift shop will remain open, primarily selling our handmade soap. Our sisters make new soap almost weekly, so if it is sold out, please check back later in the month and it should be re-stocked. Thank-you.

Pentecost

Today, wind sweeps over deep darkness and hovers over the face of the waters.
On this day, you send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Today, you speak through the prophets saying ‘dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord.’
On this day, stoney hearts are restored to flesh.
Behold, you make all things new.

Today, you breathe on the disciples and say, ‘receive the Holy Spirit.’
On this day, the fire that does not consume is lit;
the Gospel is now blazing.

Today, living water flows forth from the temple, bringing healing and life to all who thirst.
On this day, the water becomes a spring within us welling up to eternal life.

Deified by this breath from above,
transformed from darkness into children of light,
on this day, let us adore
Him who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
and pours the gift, which is Love, into our hearts.

+ By Sr. Claire, O.P.

St. Thomas Aquinas’ Advice

A daily dose of eutrapelia* is necessary for your good health!



* Eutrapelia = “wittiness,” the art of having occasional relaxation & fun.
Summa Theologiae II-II Q. 168 A. 2

Donation Information



Canadian friends

If you wish to receive an income tax receipt, please send your cheques to:
Queen of Peace Monastery
Box 1745
Garibaldi Highlands, B.C.
V0N 1T0 CANADA
Cheque Memo: **Queen of Peace Monastery**

American friends

We regret that we are currently unable to offer tax receipts for American donations. We continue to be deeply grateful for your gifts and bequests.

Please remember my intentions in your prayer: _____

Name: _____ Street: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

We assure you of our daily prayers for your family, friends and special intentions.