

July 11, 2020

Dear Sisters,

As we celebrate the feast of St. Benedict today, I pray that we are truly following his example of letting peace be our quest and aim. Peace is the greatest gift we have to offer our world during this challenging time.

In an article written by Rev. Jeff Kirby, we are reminded that Benedict “did not flee from an ‘evil world,’ but stepped aside from it so that he might be an instrument of goodness. Benedict did not abandon the world. He took the world into his heart and sought to make his life an oblation of peace and holiness.”

Benedict withdrew from a world of moral corruption, political confusion, economic instability, and brutal invasions. The world around us today has echoes of similar challenges. As we have been forced to withdraw into the cave of our monastery during this pandemic time, we, like Benedict, are not fleeing from the world. Instead, we are experiencing opportunities to deepen our relationship with God – our true source of peace.

Just as St. Benedict’s time in the cave in Subiaco was not focused on his own disappointments, frustrations, and selfishness, our time of separation has not been for us alone. Through our prayer, we continue to connect with the world around us. Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones to the COVID-19 virus without having had an opportunity to say goodbye; for them, we offer prayers of comfort. Our hearts ache for single parents who have lost their jobs and are worried about feeding and clothing their children; for them, we send prayers of courage and strength. Our hearts cry out along with our brothers and sisters of different colors seeking justice and an end to racism in our society; for them, we offer prayers of hope and perseverance as together we seek to bring about racial harmony and peace.

St. Benedict did not first seek to transform the world; instead, he sought first to transform himself. By taking the world into his heart and breathing peace into its brokenness, St. Benedict birthed new life into the world. Sisters, during this time of separation from the world, we are being drawn closer to the heart of God. We are listening with the ear of our hearts to the pain of the world, and we are being transformed. Let us continue on our journey together of seeking peace within ourselves so that when we hear God’s voice we will not harden our hearts. At that moment, we will be poised to respond to the Spirit’s promptings as we say, “Here am I, Lord. Send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)



In Christ’s peace,

*Sister Tonette, OSB*