

Lent... A Season of Hope

At the Trappist Abbey

Easter Is the Heart of Life

Piffard — Last week, even though they were still immersed in the observance of Lent, the monks of the Abbey of Our Lady of the Genesee, a Trappist cloister, explained how the celebration of Easter relates to their lives, and particularly to their lives as monks.

Brother Michael Hughes opined that "there are no two Easters alike," for him. Brother Michael said that the celebration of each Easter depends on "how far advanced in grace we are."

He has been reflecting recently on the 23rd Psalm, and asked, with the psalmist, "What man can pay the ransom of death?" Brother Michael answered, "Only the God-Man can ransom us."

The Eucharist is the constant presence of the risen Lord among us, he said. Lent, he offered, is the period of reconciliation — the time to bring us back into relationship with the Father — which the Eucharist celebrates.

"Easter is the morning when Jesus came back from the dead and burst in on the disciples who had lost all



Fr. Stephen



Fr. John Eudes



Br. Michael



Br. Christian



Br. Philip



Br. Aelred

hope, and restored and purified their lives. He gave them a new vision," Father Stephen Leahy said.

Father Stephen sees the celebration of Easter as a "day of reconciliation," on which the disciples would work out the experience of the resurrection in their own lives — that they "would

take on the mind and heart that were his own."

If anything, Brother Christian Walsh is an enthusiast for self-acceptance followed by acceptance of others.

Easter, he said is the demonstration of God's "mercy unfolding throughout the world. The

alienated are now pardoned, taken up with Him. Our security is with him."

The whole time of Lent, for Brother Christian, was spent exploring the reality of Easter as a source of self-confidence. "He accepts us, that is our hope. Someone is with you; but our challenge is to accept one another in kind," he said.

Father John Eudes Bamberger is the abbot of the monastery. To him, "Easter is the renewed contact with the deepest dimension of our relationship with our Lord."

"It is centered on the one who rose," he said, "on the one who was once dead and who is living and active and present among us."

There is a whole cosmic dimension to the celebration of Easter, which Father John Eudes characterized as standing "in the center of our lives and all creation."

He sees Easter as both promise and fulfillment — "fulfillment of all things in him."

It signifies "a new kind of life, not what we have been used to, a discovery of a new life," he said.

Brother Philip Harmon is intrigued by the notion in the Book of Job that God is

"my vindicator," that Easter is the demonstration of that notion.

The word for vindicator in the Hebrew text, he said, should actually be translated as blood avenger.

The entire Jobean phrase is "I know that my vindicator lives." ab The entire chapter, Brother Philip describes Job's near des out, pair over God's apparent absence; and concludes with a ringing affirmation of

God's presence and a testament to resurrection.

Brother Aelred Wentz describes Easter as "a sort of seal — that you know life has meaning, that it's not just a day-to-day existence; but that everything has meaning. That life is good."

Each of our daily actions, he said, has a special significance in the light of Easter. All human activity is given a "higher reason," for being performed, when it is viewed in the light of Easter.

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- Breaded Veal Cutlet with Tomato Sauce
- Baked Stuffed Chicken, with dressing Orange Cranberry Sauce, giblet gravy
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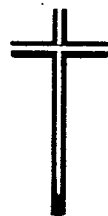
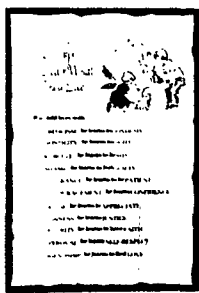
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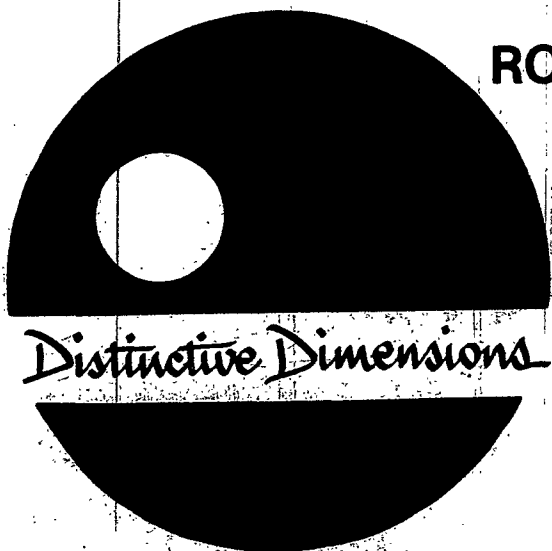


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