



Happy the man who remains steadfast under trial, for having passed that test, he will receive for his prize the gift of life to those who love God.

A doubting man asks of Jesus -- "How much do you love me"? -- "This much" -- and He stretched out His arms and died".

Today marks a day in which Brother Nicholas, after much trial and testing, will make his First Annual Profession in The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory. Today, when he prostrates himself before the altar, he lays down along side of the countless thousands of religious who have taken on the discipline and regimen of Holy Mother Church. He has made the decision to share in the pain and the suffering of those nails -- the same nails Jesus endured to show us how much He loved us -- enough to die for us. But we must all keep in mind that to take up the cross is to have the choice of refusing its burden. Nicholas has chosen not to refuse. And suffer he will through his life for the choice.

In the moving play "Luther" by John Osborne, a knight describes the scene when Luther took his stand at the Diet of Worms: said the knight, "I just felt quite sure, quite certain, that nothing could ever be the same. Something had taken place -- something had become something else; an event had occurred in the flesh and in the breathlike, even like when the weight of that body slumped on its wooden crotch piece and the earth grew dark".

Since the weight of the body of Jesus gave out and gave up -- the face of death has changed and been conquered.

Back to Brother Nicholas for a moment: I am sure that our brother has gone through much tearing up of his mental facilities in reaching this day in his religious life. If he has not, we shall all be surprised. All of us who have a vocation to this life, be it in a Traditional Order or one like The Brotherhood have periods of doubt and uncertainty. And we also ask to have the cup pass from us as did Our Lord. For those who get to First Profession the cup has been tasted -- we ask for what lies ahead. We ask for ways to serve and ways to act. We ask for ways to use the Holy Spirit -- and not store his graces up. Nicholas today takes on the quality of a stained glass saint in a window. Once, when a child was asked for her definition of a saint shown in such a window, she said "a saint is someone who lets the light shine through." At this point in our brother's life with the Order and his God, the light of his faith should be shining dimly -- for he is not yet that saint. He is showing his trust and confidence in the Lord by making promises or vows which change his life, as the Diet of Worms changed the thoughts of that knight years ago.

Today is known in many places as "Low Sunday". I suppose the main reason is that the many C.E. Christians have come and are gone again. (By the way C.E. does not stand for Church of England, but for Christmas and Easter). The trumpets have played their fanfares and the choirs have sung their best. But, life is not all exaltation and the journey Nicholas begins today will not be all high altitudes and peaks. There will be valleys and plains and although in the shadow of Mount Saint Helens, he will have low places too. Fortunately the summits are linked by valleys and plains, for God is the God of valleys and plains as well as high and exalted places. Making his choice to chance a summit he may not be able to climb is part-of the natural, uninduced high which we get from the Holy Spirit. Today and every Sunday will be "High Sunday" from now on.

(Nicholas) before I end what I hope will be a brief homily, I would leave you with three thoughts on how you can accept God and his will for you today and in the years to come.

I ask you now to accept what I would call "God in Three Tenses".

FIRST The God "who is" is for you the God that is in control of His universe. The world which He so greatly loves cannot slip out of His Hands. You are in those hands.

SECOND: The God "who was" is no spectator of events. How the reverent Hebrews treasured and relived the past in which they discerned the creative action of the Great God in whom they believed. We were not there but God was. God does not watch you in your life as a Brother. He is the chief force in your life of service.

THIRD: "The God who is to come" -- only Christians can welcome the future cheerfully because they know that regardless of what it brings, no matter what may be coming -- they know who is coming.

We may work and live as if everything depended on us, but we must work and live confident that everything depends ultimately on the God we love and serve in Christ.

Stretch out your arms and serve Him this day and always. See God as the guiding force in your life. And when you ask Him how much he loves you -- He will show the nail prints and say "this much".

God asks no man whether he will accept His plan for him. That is not the choice. only The choice is How. AMEN

Brother Richard Thomas, BSG
Superior

Through our Appeal For Mission we ask your support for the work of the Order. Everyone is very aware of the "spiraling inflation" today and it effects us at least as much as it does you. But our Brotherhood Vestment Exchange is receiving more and more requests and our Intercession List is being sent to an ever-expanding readership through THE SERVANT (900 per month to date). The costs involved rise constantly and we must look to you for help.

Along with this issue you will find a self-addressed envelope for your gift. Please be as generous as you can. Of course, all donations are tax deductible and a receipt will be provided upon request.

May our Lords' blessing be upon you now and always!

COMMUNITY NOTES

THE SUPERIOR'S VISITATION TO PORTLAND, OREGON

On Friday, April 24th, the Superior, joined by Brother Leslie Victor, flew to Portland, Oregon for the First Annual Profession of Brother Nicholas. On Saturday the paid a visit to the Visitation Retreat in Federal Way, Washington. Here they met with Sister Margaret Mary, VHM, the Visitation Nun (RC) instrumental in the Order's Foundation. They spent some time there and also met Mother Anne, Superior and another sister formerly of the Riverdale, New York Monastery. The trip afforded views of Mount Ranier and Mount Hood along with the infamous Mount Saint Helens, which was spouting steam.

On Sunday morning they attend the 9 : AM Low Mass and at 11: AM the Superior received the First Profession of Brother Nicholas and preached. A reception followed at which they were able to meet the many people at Saint Mark's who have been so supportive of our work there.

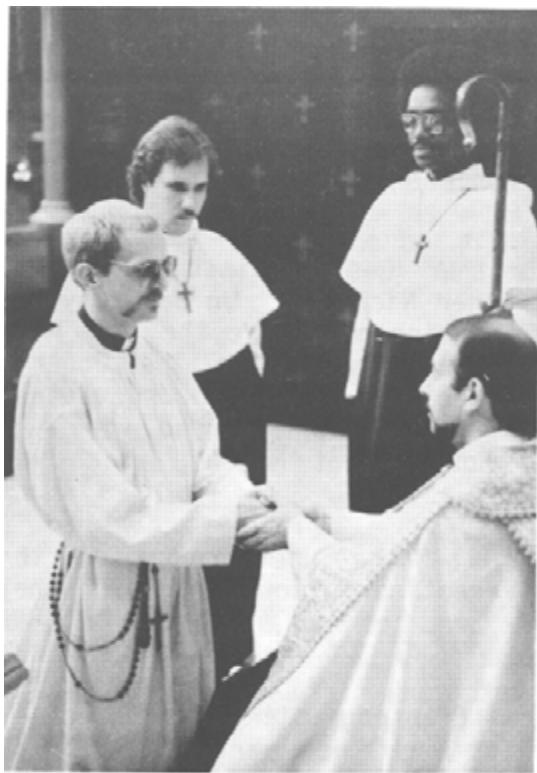
Sunday evening they participated in a Solemn Ecumenical Evensong with local churches. Monday evening, the 27th, the Patronal Festival of Saint Mark they participated in a Solemn Pontifical Mass with Confirmation, the Rt. Rev'd Hal Gross, Retired Suffragan Presiding and Preaching. Thanks is in order to Father Frane, Rector of Saint Mark's for his concern and support for the Order.

MASSACHUSETTS: While recuperating from an extended illness in Boston, Brother William attended Masses and Offices at the Church of Saint John the Evangelist, Bowden Street (administered by the Cowley Fathers). Father Clayton, SSJE (the priest-in-charge) was quite gracious in asking our Brother to assist as lector at several services. We all rejoice in the ever-increasing fellowship shared between the various Orders of the Church.

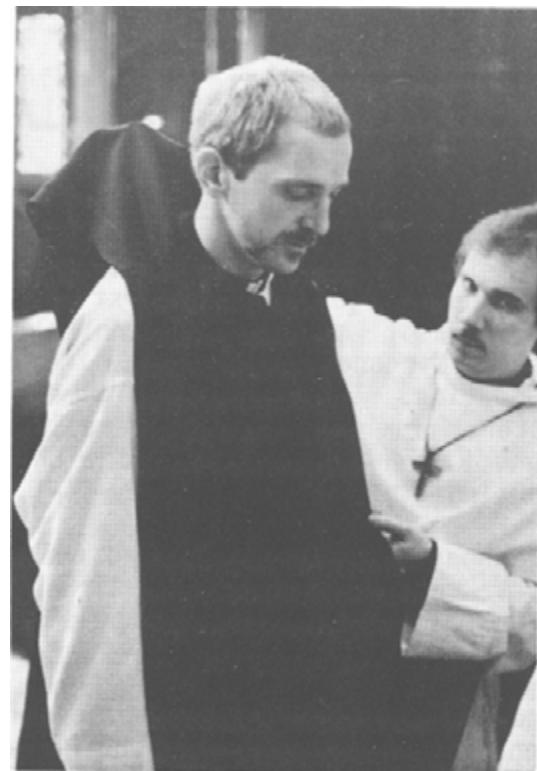
MARYLAND: It was with both joy and sorrow that Brother John and Father Henry Fukui withdrew from the Church of Saint Anne in Damascus, as of May 1. For 19 months Brother John served there as interim pastor and parochial administrator, together with Father Fukui as Sacramental minister; and during that time a great love and friendship developed between them and their congregation. (Brother and Father have withdrawn in order to make way for a permanent rector). As a post-script, Brother John has just received a call from the Vestry of Christ Church, Rockville, to be Assistant there. WASHINGTON, D.C.: On Low Sunday (April 26) Brothers James and John were privileged to attend the Welcoming Service at the National Cathedral for the Conference of Anglican Primates. It was a glorious occasion, the first of its kind ever held in the United States, and our Brothers met many old friends there. They had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of His Grace, the Most Rev'd Robert A. K. Runcie, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as having time to chat with the Rt. Rev'd John M. Allin, Presiding Bishop of the American Church; the Rt. Rev'd John T. Walker, Bishop of Washington and many of the archbishops present for the conference. Also attending was Father Connor Lynn, Superior of the Order of the Holy Cross, with several of his Brothers.

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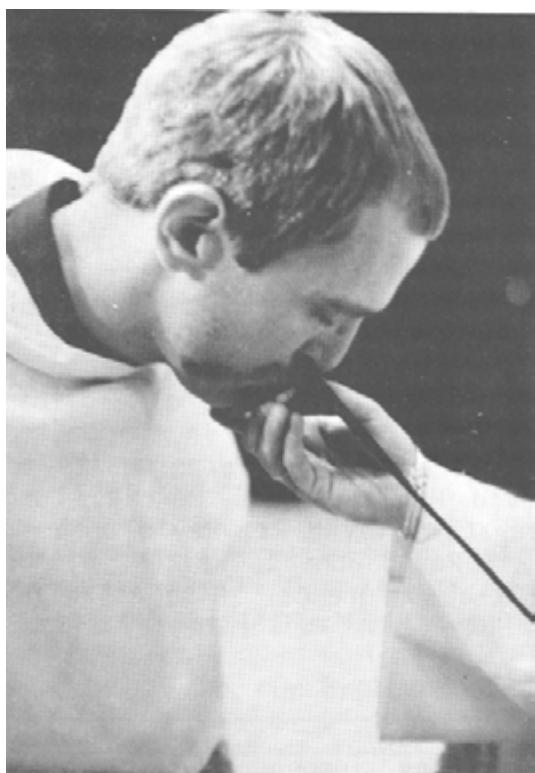
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I Nicholas, make these Vows.....



The Scapular, apron of Service



Receive The Cross of the Order.....



Happy the man who remains steadfast

INTERCESSIONS

FOR THE ILL

LAVINIA WHALEY

FOR THE DEPARTED

RT. REV'D HAROLD LOUIS WRIGHT
ROSE OKEN

FOR THE CLERGY, All Bishops, Priests and Deacons, especially:

RT. REV'D JOHN M. ALLIN
RT. REV'D PAUL MOORE, JR. (Visitor)
RT. REV'D MATTHEW P. BIGLIARDI
RT. REV'D WILLIAM G. BLACK

MOST REV'D ROBERT A. K. RUNCIE
RT. REV'D HORACE W. B. DONEGAN
RT. REV'D PHILIP A. SMITH
RT. REV'D ALEXANDER D. STEWART

Rev'd Elwin D. Brown
Rev'd Stuart K. Frane
Rev'd Randolph L. Frew
Rev'd Henry N. Fukui
Rev'd Raleigh D. Hairston
Rev'd J. Norman Hall
Rev'd Errol Harvey
Rev'd Philip G. Houghton
Rev'd Frank L. Knight

Rev'd Wayland E. Melton
Rev'd Robert R. Parks
Rev'd Thomas F. Pike
Rev'd Robert Pollard, III
Rev'd Thomas R. Schulze
Rev'd Robert J. Vanderau
Rev'd Richard C. Wayne
Rev'd Edgar F. Wells, Jr.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS, especially

The Visitation Nuns
Sisters of the Holy Nativity

The Sacramentine Nuns
Sisters of Jesus

SPECIAL INTENTIONS FOR:

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk, England.
the birthday of Brother Roger, BSG.
Brother James, BSG
Brother Tobias Stanislas, BSG upon his reception as a Novice in the Order.
Brother Martin, SCK
Edward Robinson, Jerry Moize, and William Williams and Sanford R. Sears.
Charlotte and Marty

THANKSGIVINGS FOR:

the bestowing of the Holy Spirit upon God's faithful people; the creation of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, the Day of Pentecost.