

# PACEM in TERRIS

P E A C E O N E A R T H

## Win! Win! Win!

One day you open a letter or answer the phone and discover, "You are a winner!" You say, "Who Me?" I've never won anything in my life! Maybe it's a turkey, a trip to the Bahamas or maybe a million dollars! Winning is exciting—even before you know what you've won!

"Win, Win, Win!" what's it all about? It's about our days filled with gifts from God, freely given, *"full measure, shaken together, pressed down and running over..."* (Luke 6:38). Yes, we are daily winners, receiving gifts, and often forgetting to thank the Giver!

Surrounded by the beauty of our incredible environment, we bask in sunsets, rainbows, roses, singing birds, and the night skies. We could find a name for all the beauty in our everyday! Our Almighty Creator God has left nothing out! We have been given the gift of life with a body, soul and spirit! We are able to seek knowledge and truth, and the wonders of the spirit, faith, hope and love! We are able to become fully alive and live in the unconditional love of our

God. The most precious things in life are free! And then the ultimate gift of eternal life was tragically lost! Our loving Father sent us His



Son to rescue us! His name was Jesus! He came into this world to save us—and He did! He paid the price for all of us to "win back" the gift of eternal life.

That's what we celebrate during this holy season, freedom to live forever! We are winners! Not by a chance drawing, but by the gift of love that flows from our Almighty God!

Look around you and within your heart—and see what you

have won—free and clear! Claim it all with great joy, delight, excitement, appreciation and most of all with a grateful heart for the Giver.

And then with a humble heart we need to thank the Giver! How do we find a way to say, "Thank You" each day to our mighty God? Our God who created the wonder of the universe and the wonder of each one of us!

We listen carefully to Jesus and the desire of His own heart when He tells us, *"Love one another as I have loved you."* (Jn 15:12) Our response will be a treasured "Thank you gift" to our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then we win the fullness of life and love and joy and peace and happiness with the whole family of God forever! Eternal Life! Alleluia!!! ♦

***"We adore You  
O Christ  
and we praise You  
because by  
Your Holy Cross  
You have redeemed  
the world!"***

## Just a note . . .

As we reflect in this Lenten Season we are reminded first and foremost of the Cross that Jesus so willingly embraced and endured out of pure love for our salvation. What a gift of unconditional love!

We too are invited to examine our own crosses in life. All of us, no matter where we are on our faith journey, experience the cross in many forms.

The hermits who come to Pacem are given a unique opportunity to go deeper in examining their crosses in the freedom of the hermitage. In the solitude and serenity of this holy place they are able to lay down their burdens at the foot of the Ultimate Cross. They are truly blessed in this very intimate union with Jesus. They experience the healing power of the cross, the opportunity for continued conversion, and just as Easter Sunday promises—true joy and new beginnings. They leave renewed and refreshed.

May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you all in a very special way this Easter Season!

Brenda

## Saint Paul the Apostle

Paul, born Saul of Tarsus, never met Jesus face-to-face as the other apostles had, yet his entire life was changed by a supernatural encounter with Christ.

A Jewish zealot, Saul was on his way to Damascus to arrest followers



of Jesus, when suddenly a great light flashed around him and he fell to the ground. He

heard a voice say, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" He said, "Who are you, Lord?" The voice

replied, "I am Jesus and you are persecuting me..." (Acts 9:3-6). In an instant, Saul knew Jesus was the miraculous fulfillment of all he had been pursuing in his scrupulous observance of the law of the Pharisees. This profound event was the beginning of his own intimate relationship with Christ.

Paul then spent his life tirelessly proclaiming the message of the Cross—that through the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven and we can receive eternal life. He taught that we are saved entirely by God's grace and mercy—that we cannot earn our own salvation. When we receive this gift and commit our lives to Christ, we are able to do even greater works than our observance of the "law" could ever accomplish.

## Appreciation



Prayer Partners and Volunteers enjoyed a presentation by Fr. Tim Nolan on "The Cross" at our Appreciation Day, March 14.

## Change in scenery



A major oak wilt outbreak has seen a number of our Pacem oaks cut down off Highway 47 to prevent further spread of the disease. We trust that with new saplings and plantings we can soon have the woods restored.

Paul's prayer is for you "to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth, until knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God" (Eph. 3:14-21, JB).

The Church has set aside June 29 to celebrate the holy life of Saint Paul. Pope Benedict XVI has dedicated June 29, 2008-2009 as a Holy Year of blessing from the Lord. ♦

# The Power of the Cross

**He was born to die so we could live!**

**W**hen you enter a Pacem Hermitage you notice the large plain wooden Cross over the little altar. The Cross is THE sign and symbol of God's love for us. *"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ...that the world might be saved through him."* [John 3:16-17]

Because the Cross was the instrument chosen by God it has become the sign of and reminder of that great love God has for all of us. *"Greater love than this no one has than to lay down his life for his friends."* [John 15:13]

The Cross is made from the wood of a tree. Original sin came into the world through a tree in the Garden of Eden so deliverance from sin and eternal life is won for us through the tree of the Cross.

We were incapable of freeing ourselves from the burden, bondage and death of sin. Jesus, the Son of God, came to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. He was born to die so that we could be free and live.

The Cross addresses the mystery of suffering in this world. Though the mystery of suffering remains, what is revealed in the Cross is Jesus entry into and accompanying us in our suffering. He loves us and shows us the way to ultimate victory over

sin and suffering and death. He tells us: *"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross every day and follow me."* [Luke 14:27]



**The Cross . . . the central truth of our Christian faith**

That daily Cross is an emptying of self so as to live in an entirely selfless manner, as Jesus Himself did.

When you see a plain Cross without its Crucified, the Saints remind us, that Cross is your Cross: the Cross of each day, the hidden Cross, without splendor or consolation – the Cross which is awaiting the Crucified it lacks; and that Crucified is you in mystical union with Christ. ♦

## Hermit Notes

♥ "Thank you, it has been a long time since I have been on a personal retreat. This has been a very blessed time with my Father--the sight is now clearer, the Hope fuller and the heart stronger...."

♥ "This blessed place is a jewel in a very messed up world. While I was here I was able to sort through the mess a bit and come face to face with just me--without all the crazy outside interference."

♥ "Even with our newly emptied nest, we find that we still need to come away as hermits! Somehow, there we become keenly aware of inhabiting the present moment--our perception is sharpened and our hearts disarmed, that they might receive. Once again we are filled with gratitude."

♥ "I have just realized that the Lord seeks me even more than I seek Him!"

♥ "Thank you again, once more this hermit has had a unique encounter with God. As always, He shows me what He wants me to know--not my agenda!"

♥ "I am so grateful for Pacem, God's "little peek at Paradise"! My fear of the dark is falling away and I venture out at night for a walk--what beauty and feeling of intimacy with God."

♥ "Thank you for the blessing this lovely place has been for me. I leave with a joy that is like dangling my feet in a cool stream!"

## Pacem Profile

Peggy Franson has given a new meaning to the word volunteer. She is lively and energetic as she uses her homemaking skills in the Pacem kitchen. Many Fridays Peggy can be seen making salad or dessert for the evening meal. We are deeply grateful for her willingness to serve. Her gift of time and energy is a blessing that truly benefits our guests. And the staff enjoy her bright smiles, too!



*Thank you, Peggy!*

## Dear friends,

My phone rang, a strange voice said, "Shirley Wanchena? You have just won a flight with the Red Baron in an open cockpit, Stearman biplane!" Stunned, I heard him say, "Did you buy a pizza lately or sign up for a drawing?" Yes, I had dropped my name in a box, never dreaming I would win! Continuing, the Red Baron offered choices for dates and made the arrangements.

Memories came flooding back forty-two years, and flying with my husband Victor. He was a private pilot and our favorite "date" was to go flying in a Piper Cub, doing wild aerobatics that would send my spirit soaring!

Eagerly waiting, the exciting day arrived and I was greeted at the airport by the Red Baron, a reporter and photographer. Soon, seated behind the pilot, strapped in, my white flying scarf in place, the Red Baron asked me, "Would I like to cruise around the area or do Aerobatics?" Of course, I said "Aerobatics!" After a few simple dips and dives, he wondered if I had had enough "movements"? "Heavens no" I said, "Please do all your tricks!" Surprised and delighted, the dips and dives took on new life, we began soaring like an eagle, with loops, figure eights, and more--we were really flying! I was ecstatic to once again be sailing through the sky!

I had been a wholehearted and happy winner, for all of 45 minutes! If that flight was so many things in a short time think of what we "win" every day as God pours forth his blessings into our lives! My heart overflows, with winnings among them, my Baptism, Motherhood and Pacem in Terris! Alleluia!

*Shirley Wanchena*

## Closing the Gap

To you, the Faithful, we thank you, we pray for you and we ask you to please stay with us in this Pacem ministry of God's Amazing Grace! You enabled us to collect \$20,000 for the Matching Grant, not only matching it, but going over the top! Your generous hearts also "closed the gap" for our 2008 year-end shortfall. Thank you! (St Joseph House, our first building, after 21 years needed a new furnace---closing the gap, also paid that bill!)

Our New Year has begun with a greater number of hermit-guests than ever. The turmoil in our country has moved more "Believers" to seek God for answers, healing, wisdom and His will for their lives. Scripture tells us, "Turn back to God with all your hearts". It is happening!

Now with humble hearts we ask again, would you please continue to help us "close the gap" for 2009? We steward your gifts prayerfully and carefully, grateful for the huge blessing of paying our monthly bills. Thank you again for everything!

The years go by quickly, you can leave a legacy of your faith through Pacem! Please remember us in your estate planning. Our legal address is:

Pacem in Terris  
26399 Highway 47 NW  
Isanti, MN 55040

*"For where your  
treasure is,  
there will  
your heart  
be also."*

Matt 6:21