

## A Life of Solitude and Prayer

May 5, 2019



Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the wonderful springtime joy you are bringing to us.

I have some wonderful things to share with you, Family. Especially those of you who have been wanting to withdraw into prayer, and not be a part of the world anymore. But be praying FOR the world.

I like to quote a famous author (can't remember his name right now!) who talked about being at the hub of the wheel. When you live the lifestyle of seclusion and prayer, you're at the hub of all life. You can reach out and touch the spokes from the hub, and the wheel is what turns the world. And the spokes are the individual ministries and works that people do. And when you're at the hub, you're actually at a point where you can pray for all of those things. It's a very exciting life of intercession.

And I want to share with you a vision I had about 30 years ago of a community of monks and sisters, living in very primitive setting. Very plain dwellings in the deep woods high up in the mountains. Ezekiel and I had moved to the mountains after he became a priest. We wanted a place of substantial solitude away from all the busyness in the world...the EMF's and electronic pollution. A place to pray and seek God unhindered.

To make a long story short, St. Francis had already picked out this land, 3 miles from the road. Three rough, rugged miles from the road. Steep terrain, an old logging road with a few precipitous drop-offs. I knew it was the place when I saw it, because the Lord had said to me, *"Look for what's in your heart. What's the vision in your heart."* And the vision in my heart was aspen trees and fir and spruce. And just a very green and forested area.

Well, we were searching different properties to see what was for sale. And we came across this one. And after quite a struggle, got up all the way to the place where we had to start walking from, actually. And this place couldn't have been more perfect. Beautiful, beautiful aspen forest with ferns and very green grass. Elk, bear, lion...everything you could imagine up there.

We built a few small buildings for solitary living and prayer, called Hermitages, which we later found resembled the Russian Orthodox monk's dwellings. Just a simple, maybe 20x20 square with a slanted roof and huge window overlooking the forest. And a bunk bed and a desk beneath. And a little kitchen counter - and that's it. And of course, the outhouse had a spectacular view, because you could take your bucket and go anywhere in the forest! And had a different view every day.

Well. We had to use horses to get up and down the mountain and pack in our supplies during the winter and spring months.

From this place, we came into the small town of Penasco, and served the poor with a food bank every week. Life there was very holy. People would hike the three miles to receive counsel and pray in the chapel. We had a small glass-roofed chapel with glass doors, hidden deep in the aspen forest. What a blessed place it is!

After living there for 5 years, the Lord moved us into Taos. And some years later, we started our YouTube ministry.

I have held onto the dream of returning with a group of souls dedicated to prayer, because the Lord promised this would someday happen. The few that did come to try the life out within that five-year period were very attached to the world, and they just weren't ready to forsake everything.

So, I am going to share this calling with you, dear ones. Because I know there are those among you who long for this life. And the Lord is telling us that now is the time.

And "Hope in Winter Comes" is our latest book. It's the visions, apparitions of the Blessed Mother in Florida. And her counsels. This is from Chapter Twelve. And btw, if you want a copy, Amazon has it. Or you can get a copy from us if you send us a postcard or something, letting us know what your address is.

The Chapter title is: "If You Would be Perfect: To Live For Him Alone." And I remember from the Gospels, when the rich man came to Him and said, "What should I do?" And the Lord said, "If you would be perfect, go. Sell all you have, give to the poor. Then come, follow Me." And that's the calling for basically a Franciscan. Who wants to live in the forest and pray?

The Lord said, "Not all will be willing to lose their life for the Kingdom."

So, here's the first quote from the book, from Our Lady. "Not all will be willing to lose their life for the Kingdom. My children, those of you who would lose your life for the Kingdom of My Son, I tell you truly, YOU SHALL FIND IT."

After the sweet visitation from God the Father, Our Mother of Mercy appeared. I began crying out to her in my heart for vocations to this holy way of life. She reached over and took something into her arms, placing it over my outstretched arms. I saw that it was a habit. Then she reached over again and placed another one over my arms and another, and another, and another. I was incredulous. Finally, the stack of habits was twelve or thirteen deep and she placed a handmade crucifix on top and said, "And there are more coming."

Okay! Well, this was... golly! Zoom back 20 years ago, actually, when this all happened. Maybe 25 years ago. And we've been waiting for the vision to materialize. The mandate was there, but you know? You just have to wait sometimes.

Well, I began to suspect this vision, because when we want something really badly, or have an attachment to a certain result, the enemy can come in with counterfeit messages to lead us astray. I was about to dismiss this visitation when I began to see not Our Lady, but another smiling face before me. It was Mother Theresa of Calcutta. We use her teachings for formation and guidance, and I consider her a second St. Francis. I saw her smiling at me and she was stooped over a sewing machine. She was working steadily, sewing habits. Wow. And I wore a gray habit, by the way. That was the original color of the habits, was gray.

I was tickled and began to laugh. Certainly, Our Lady knows how to break through my doubts. There was such a sweetness and spontaneity about it that I knew it was authentic.

The Blessed Virgin began to speak, "I have many souls for you. Many vocations. As your structure becomes firmer, as the bones develop and become solid, and you are able to bear the weight, I shall send you souls.

"Many souls, my daughter, are in need of this instruction and structure. Many are seeking A LIFE WORTH LIVING. A life with meaning, with purpose, in truth, enduring throughout eternity. Structure is so very important to you to be able to stand. You must not be a jellyfish."

(Here she is using an expression that I am very familiar with.)

"I wish to have an army of committed KNIGHTS in ARMS."

(The arms being prayer and fasting with good works of every kind.)

She continued, "An army of intercessors. Not many. Carrying my Holy Banner of Love, marching through the world of hatred and opposition to God's will."

I saw in the spirit an army carrying the banner of the Holy Cross. When she said, "not many" I thought of Gideon's 300. They were men picked out of thousands, because they drank water from the river a certain way. In my Bible, the notes from the seventh chapter of Judges says:

"The Lord desired not numerous but reliable soldiers. Those who drank from their hands were alert, standing ready to resist attack, whereas the others were careless and undependable, and the cowards had already been weeded out."

Chapters six and seven of Judges is all about the call of Gideon, who said, "Please, my Lord, how can I save Israel? My family is the meanest in Manasseh, and I am the most insignificant in my father's house."

Wow. Today in prayer, after Ezekiel and I had talked about this, that the Lord was bringing this to fruition now. I just sat and cried in front of the altar. And just told the Lord I am way too small for all of this. This is just not... I'm just not fit for this. And we know what His answer

always is about that. "You're not fit, and that's what I wanted. 'Cause I want all the credit for it!"

It was difficult for me to grasp. Because the reality now is coming home.

Mannasa's heart was not unlike that of St. Francis who declared that the Lord searched the whole Earth for the most contemptible, unlikely candidate for restoring Holy Mother Church—and in all His searches, could find no one more unsuitable than Francis. In this way, only Christ would be glorified, not a man. And so, the Lord continues to call those who see themselves, rightly so, the most unsuitable to serve Him.

There are some remarkable lessons in these two chapters of Judges to teach us about the supernatural call of God on our lives. I encourage you to read them.

Our Lady continued to speak, "Not all will be willing to lose their life for the Kingdom."

Then she began to address all of us in this way, "My children, those of you who would lose your life for the Kingdom of My Son, I tell you truly, you shall find it. Those of you who will not, shall lose even what little you have. For to those who have, more is given. And to those who have not, even what little you have shall be taken from you.

"Do not marvel at this saying, for unto him who was given ten talents and reproduced those ten more, more was given. But to him who buried the one and reproduced none, he was put outside and soundly beaten.

"My children, you will be held accountable for what God has given you: your life's breath, your time on this Earth, your abilities. If you do not put your best effort forward, you shall be held accountable. My children, no halfway measures, please. Give it your all. My Son gave His all. You owe it to Him. Do not withhold your best efforts.

"This I say to you, not to shame you, but to call you to account now while there is still time to repent and live a life worthy of the name Christian and full of the promises of Heaven.

"If you are slothful, you shall spend much time in the fires of Purgatory doing there what you should have done here. A serious opportunity has been set before you. It asks of you a serious response.

"For those of you who take my words with the utmost seriousness, I shall be by your side and all of Heaven shall be your help and entourage. The more you strive for perfection, the more the Heavenly Host will protect and assist you. I tell you solemnly, not one drop of suffering shed, not one supernatural effort shall go unnoticed.

"Satan's scheme is to undermine your good works by saying they are too little." (In that moment, I thought of that afternoon treat I could go without) She continued, "Nothing, my

children, is too little. Everything shall be rewarded. I beg of you, put your best foot forward. I shall not fail you in the blessings that will follow."

And you know? When I withhold my best from the Lord, because of some personal advantage, those things that I gain are the very things that I will completely lose at death. But when I give up that personal advantage, as a fast offering unto the Lord, it will bear fruit that will proceed me into Heaven.

During the second Joyful Mystery tonight, (and this talking from the time of the apparition) Our Lady came dressed as a peasant woman with a bushel of walnuts in her arms. She poured the walnuts out onto a table that was set before me. This was such a curious vision, yet I knew instinctively that she was demonstrating vocations to me. (In other words, people who are called to this kind of life.) I became even more convinced when she allowed me to see that within each hull was a precious diamond.

Then she began to list words to me, words that I was familiar with.

"Outer covering, common, poor, rough, plain, nothing extraordinary or unusual, commonplace, plain wrapper, simple, humble. All these things and more are what we want you to be. Nothing, nothing, to draw any attention to you as being special."

As I looked at the table full of walnuts, I saw that it was in a very rough room in the wilderness. While I was watching, little diamonds went on fire with light, emerged from the hulls and went off in different directions. Our Lady took me by the hand to follow one and it went off into the forest towards a precious spot that we planned to build an hermitage at the Refuge.

Then she resumed speaking, "They are vocations. Souls who love to pray. Souls I am entrusting to you. Soon, very soon, there will be much excitement in your lives. I will teach you how to serve them. Don't worry, I wouldn't give them to you without the grace to direct and serve them. Each baby comes with instructions, and special helps from Heaven."

In the background, the meditation, Father was saying, "We are not to hold our heads down and cower in fear." That sure described what I was feeling while she was saying this. Our Lady took a diamond from a walnut shell and held it before me.

It sparkled in her fingers, as she continued, "Each one is so different, special, unique. No two are the same. Oh, how lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord, my God. How special Your virgin souls, called to love and serve You. I give You praise, Father, for you have hidden these things from the high and mighty, but given and revealed them to the lowly and poor in spirit.

"Continue to be lowly in spirit. I will send you pure gemstones to build this community."

Wow. It's been a long 20 years! A really long 20 years...

Dearest Mother, I entrust myself to you. Even today I found that I had to keep a serious guard over my soul, because I could feel my thoughts drifting in the wrong directions, contrary to this commonness you are teaching me. I feel most at home with this and it is most conformed to my holy state of life, this rule of life. Yet so very difficult to protect.

She continued, "I will not let you down in this; only just Trust me. I will show you what to do. Don't worry, it's going to be very beautiful."

Well, I have to admit that during this conversation, I looked down—half incredulous, half disturbed, knowing how unqualified I am. I did not want to grieve Our Lady in any way, so I kept very quiet. For surely the Almighty can do anything He wishes with anyone He wishes to do it with.

The Blessed Virgin was very tender with me. She touched my chin with her finger, lifting my face so that she could see my eyes. As I looked at her, I noticed that she was wearing a woolen veil dyed the very color of indigo that I just dyed and spun for Father's stole. It is very finely woven, but more like a scarf a Ukrainian peasant woman would be wearing. In fact, she appeared like a matron from a cold climate, not queenly at all. This is now her second visitation to us as a poor simple woman.

She spoke to me in gentle but reassuring tones, "Just Trust me... That is all I require."

Wow...