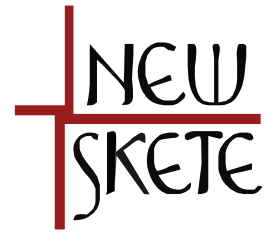


November 2019



Dear Friends,

*“We must treat nature with the same awe and wonder that we reserve for human beings. And we do not need this insight in order to believe in God or to prove his existence. We need it to breathe; we need it for us simply to be.” (Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, 2010)*

Naturally during this time of the year we all become more cognizant of what we are blessed with in this amazingly complex world; our family, our friends, our health, to name a few. Across cultures, traditions and landscapes, we give thanks, as we should. Many times we are thankful for what cannot be seen but only felt. For some it may be our relationship with God that we are most thankful for, for some perhaps it's something else entirely. What do we have in common?

### **Simply, Earth.**

It is ours to share and ours to responsibly steward. There is no arguing this. In addition to giving thanks for all we have, now is the time for us to consider how we can give back to the Earth- to honor and preserve its miraculous elements which have provided us the very air we breathe. Consider the glorious global effects that are possible, as we each take responsibility for our own decisions and actions starting in our; home; community; county; state; country; and beyond. Whether you recycle, reuse, replenish or conserve, your actions are effecting change for the future.

On this journey of working together to heal our shared, injured planet we may actually all arrive at a place of peaceful harmony ourselves. Wouldn't that be something to be thankful for?

More than ever we pray for the precarious condition of earth's resources and peace. In honor or in memory of those you love, or for the planet we all wish to save, we ask you to **consider a gift to benefit the Monks and Nuns of New Skete**. This donation from you will assist us as we continue to minister to those in need as illustrated with some examples on the back of this page.

We pray that God may bless you abundantly for your generosity of prayers, kindness, and friendship!

In Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bro. Christopher".

Brother Christopher  
Prior, Monks of New Skete

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Cecelia".

Sister Cecelia  
Prioress, Nuns of New Skete

We thank God each day that you, our friend, have chosen to bring and keep the Monks and Nuns and New Skete into your life. We are humbled by the many ways you enrich us and enable us to provide for you and many others.

In the last year, with your kind generosity we;

- Welcomed many guests to the Monks and Nuns for personal retreats.
- Hosted free community events including Open House in conjunction with Cambridge Balloon Fest, Pilgrimage which featured a guest speaker and guided trail hike and the Animal Blessing including a dog training demonstration.
- Celebrated volunteers from the Cambridge area and beyond who assisted New Skete through the year with many projects including puppy socializing, gardening, cleaning, events and more.
- Greeted various organizations who brought groups to receive guided tours the monastery churches and grounds.
- Provided personal Spiritual Direction to those who seek to further their relationship with God.
- Assembled with members of the New Skete Companion program to further develop opportunities to bring New Skete into their lives and what role the Companions, as a group, could play in assisting New Skete.
- Received hundreds of visitors on the grounds of the monastery who have enjoyed its sights and sounds including the various hiking trails.
- Held the Second Annual Monk Mile Virtual Pack Walk- which included hundreds of friends locally and across the country and raised thousands of dollars to benefit the Monks.
- Organized and hosted our second iconography painting seminar, presented by world renowned Russian instructors. Sixteen people participated in an intense week long seminar which introduced participants to both technique and theory of iconography.
- Crafted cheesecakes for people all over the country to enjoy with their families and friends, (including seasonal flavors.)
- Presented concerts by Russian musicians; the Konevets Quartet and the St Petersburg Men's Ensemble. Both vocal concerts were open to the community at no cost and were very well attended.
- Appreciated the privilege of training dogs from people entrusting us with their canine family member.
- Whelped German Shepherd puppies and matched them with their forever families.
- Participated in peace walk sponsored by the Peace Pagoda and hosted post walk meal.

Please know that as you celebrate this time of year with your family, YOU are someone we cherish and do not take for granted. We pray daily for you and the safety and wellbeing of all of God's creatures.