



## STARCROSS community

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# Sharings

Autumn 2017

## *Brother Toby:* THE PATH OFTEN BEGINS HERE

I frequently find a young person, after they've finished their work in the fields or the garden or the "forever wild" forest, sitting on a bench gazing out over the hillside. I know they're looking into the future and at the same time into their own inner world for that spiritual compass we all have.

Among the things we do here is provide a needed resting place for spiritual wanderers who are about to inherit the world. They tend to be flexible and searching for new ways of refreshing the sacred climate of the earth and its peoples.

It is a real privilege for me to share a few months with these young people. Our relationship will continue for a long time! This summer we hosted young people from 11 different countries and eight states in our own country. They were born into religious cultures including Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, agnostic, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and others. But they are all searching for paths that lead into broader horizons. They are the ones who make Starcross a truly multi-faith community. And I am confident that they will make significant contributions to the well-being of this troubled world.



Their search typically begins with finding ways to take better care of our common home — the earth. This inevitably leads to thoughts and actions about how we can take better care of each other.

As you and our other friends know, we've found ourselves engaged in a lot of activities here and around the world. But on days like this it is simpler. The land itself is the teacher. I watch young people walking through the olive groves, and opening themselves to the peaceful environment that surrounds them.

One of the most important things Starcross does is provide a place for rest and reflection, a place for spiritual wanderers to focus energy and gather strength.

## UGANDA

Starcross Kin Worldwide reports that the House of Hope in Uganda is going strong, under the leadership of young adults who grew up there. We are proud of the graduates who are leading successful, productive lives. Many of them regularly mentor the little ones at the House.



Another project spun off from the House of Hope graduates, Tina Caring Association, is working to eliminate mother-to-baby HIV transmission by providing education and rapid HIV testing to over 2,000 rural villagers per year.

## WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBORS?



Our multi-faith community has been focusing lately on compassion, trying to help

alleviate suffering. Starcross is a sanctuary community providing what we can to those in need. One local example is our Food Pantry. In this rich country, people need not go hungry. Lightening the load for struggling families is a drop in the bucket, but a needed drop. We are happy to help.

## “WHERE ARE YOUR KIDS NOW?”

That is question we hear often this time of year as people order holiday gifts. The simple answer is - they were born and raised here and are still an important part of Starcross, now and in the future! Here are thumbnail sketches of two of them.

**HOLLY** is a professional chef, and full-time mother of her four-year-old Damien. She spends several days a week at Starcross and focuses on issues of hunger both locally and elsewhere. She plans and cooks for special events



here. There are daily phone calls home and she provides transportation for doctor visits, etc. Her husband Lance is our farm manager.



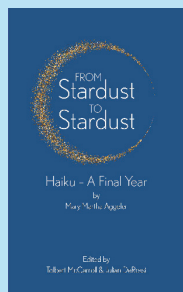
**DAVID** is a professional classical violinist and a member of the Vienna Piano Trio which performs all over the world. Their recent Brahms recordings won the European equivalent of the Grammys. David performs benefits for Starcross and organizations like Doctors Without Borders ([www.davidmccarroll.com](http://www.davidmccarroll.com)). He is very much involved with the planning of all events at Starcross, and is in contact by telephone and Skype several times a week. These two young people always will be a very important part of Starcross now and in the future.

## HELP STARCROSS MOVE AHEAD



You can remember Starcross through a provision in your will or trust, or as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy or IRA charitable contribution. Starcross Monastic Community is a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Contributions are tax deductible. Our Tax ID is 94-1687876. Call if you have questions.

## SISTER MARTI'S HAIKU



We are excited to share with you Sister Marti's beautiful book of haiku, *From Stardust to Stardust - A Final Year*. Each week between her diagnosis of pancreatic cancer and her death 12 months later, Sister Marti wrote a simple, evocative poem. These have been paired with photos of Starcross, and a brief biography of Marti written by Brother Toby. It is a lovely gift book to read often, share, and treasure, available for \$14.95 on our website or by calling 1-800-960-1500.

## BROTHER TOBY'S WRITINGS

Each week Brother Toby sends out a Friday Reflection to several thousand people on our email list. Often focusing on nature, these messages are timely and deep. Readers tell him they bring insight, solace, and fresh perspectives on issues we all face. To sign up, send your email address to [community@starcross.org](mailto:community@starcross.org) and say you'd like to be added to the email list.

Also, Brother Toby is working on an updated version of his popular 1982 edition of *The Tao, The Sacred Way*.



This Chinese classic is always relevant and inspiring. We'll keep you posted when it becomes available.

## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

Starcross Monastic Community has a Facebook page where we post weekly reflections, haiku, photos and upcoming events. Please check it out, give us a LIKE, and share with your friends!



## THE NEXT 40 YEARS ... AND THE NEXT !

Starcross Monastic Community has been flourishing in Sonoma County, northern California for over 40 years now. And what a journey it's been! Who could have predicted that our involvement with at-risk children would take us all over the world to help kids suffering because of the AIDS pandemic.

Our work with young folks is bearing fruit in different ways. Starcross has served as a haven for young seekers to recharge their batteries or reset their goals and plan the journey's next step. After leaving they often keep in touch



and share how their time here has been a critical part of their development.

So, what will the future hold for Starcross? We don't know the details, but we know we are ready. This will continue to be a safe, peaceful, and sacred place for all, young and old, who come.

## HOLIDAY ORDERS

Enclosed is our new brochure. Make our beautiful wreaths a tradition in your home.

Sister Julie's Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil will sell out so order soon! Our inspirational books, and luscious dried



fruit are guaranteed to delight everyone on your list. These holiday products are our primary means of self-support. Each order helps us continue our work. Thank you!

# STARCROSS ~ Caring for the Earth and People



There will be a conservation easement to forever protect our forests, wildlife habitat, and sacred space. Each year we plant tiny redwoods on the property. Some are now 6 feet tall! As local forests are clearcut to make room for vineyards, our “Forever Wild” acres help the land return to its original nature. As an added bonus, we have an increase of birds and songs!

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### STARCROSS MONASTIC COMMUNITY

is a small independent, multi-faith community living peaceful lives in the contemplative tradition and offering encouragement to folks on all spiritual paths. Our emphasis is on spiritual growth, preserving the land, helping others and the world.

Our organic farm is in the coastal hills of Sonoma County, CA. We've cared for children with unique gifts and needs, many of whom were born HIV positive. We've established HOUSES OF HOPE for children impacted by the AIDS epidemic in Romania and Uganda.