



STARCROSS
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Autumn Reflections From Brother Toby

Peace Among Wild Things

It begins with a few leaves. A couple of weeks back, I looked out my bedroom window at the tall sweetgum tree next to the chapel. It was a column of green going up about 60 feet. A raven was circling the top, and then I saw them— a small cluster of red leaves, harbingers of autumn! By Thanksgiving, this tree will be ablaze with shades of red, warming the heart as the days grow cold.

There had been so much activity in the garden, the barn, and the kitchen, that I felt as if summer would go on forever. But after seeing those leaves, I walked around looking at all the other deciduous trees. There was change everywhere. And with each tree, I became more aware of that transformation in the season, the air, and in me.

If we allow it, a quietness can descend upon us at this beautiful time of year. There is a peace to be found if we rest among wild things. For me it always begins with a few red leaves.



Autumn Hands

A poet I knew many years ago wrote of the wind blowing leaves across his autumn hands. I think that's what I am experiencing now. I want this earthly paradise of red and golden leaves to continue forever. I want time to stand still. But it doesn't, does it?



It is the suddenness that I object to. I am not ready for someone I love to die. I am not ready to stumble along a path where I once ran. I am not ready to witness things I loved destroyed. I am not ready to so frequently lose my train of thought and my sense of direction.

“Be honest now,” shouts the wild wind, “would you ever be ready?” No, that's right. This is not the scene I would have chosen, but it is part of my life – part of God's gift to each of us. So let us open ourselves

to whatever blows across our autumn hands.

UGANDA UPDATE



The Starcross Kin Worldwide House of Hope in Uganda continues to serve destitute AIDS orphans, providing them with a home and education. The over 150 graduates of the program have diverse careers but they come together frequently to

socialize, help out the children still in school and to be extended family to each other.

SKW was able to assist one of the early graduates in a special way. John S. lost his hand in a horrible industrial accident. SKW gave John the means to start a small farm project to help him support his young family since he can no longer be employed as a mechanic. Thanks to social media, Sister Julie stays in regular close contact with our Ugandan friends, now successful young adults.

FOOD PANTRY



The Starcross Food Pantry serves approximately 100 people with nourishing food grown here at Starcross, donated by USDA, and purchased from the Redwood Empire Food Bank. The Pantry has also become a meeting place for neighbors to catch up, share news and help each other while stocking up on food, clothing, toys and books.

FIRE AT STARCROSS

The California fire season got off to an early and terrifying start. We had a small fire here caused by a poor bird landing on a frayed power line. The burning bird fell into tall grass and the fire took off. Miraculously our local volunteer firefighters happened to be driving by in trucks on their way to a training session. They swung into action and put out the blaze, confining it to just a few acres of pasture land. No real damage was done. Since then, we have been diligently clearing defensible space around all the buildings.



Starcross is a blessed place but we can't always count on having fire trucks driving by exactly when we need them!

PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH

Since we only send snail mail once or twice a year, please sign up for our email list. You can send your email address to community@starcross.org and we'll be sure you get Brother Toby's Friday Reflections, a weekly Haiku, and occasional updates about books, events, sales, etc. We promise not to flood your In Box! Also, please LIKE Starcross Monastic Community on Facebook and share with your friends.



HELP THE STARCROSS STORY CONTINUE

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. Questions? 1 (800) 960-1500



TOMORROW'S LEADERS



We have been blessed with the presence of some amazing people helping out at Starcross. They come from all over the US and foreign countries to work in the garden, olive fields, and kitchen, enriching our lives in so many ways as they care for the Earth.

They spend free time writing haiku, playing with the dogs and cats, cooking together, riding bikes, and most importantly, developing their individual spiritual paths with help from Brother Toby and Sister Julie. Starcross is a crossroads for people from many different backgrounds. Their attitude of respect and compassion is much needed in our troubled world.

BROTHER TOBY'S WRITINGS

Although nearly 88 years old, our dear Brother Tolbert McCarroll still writes daily. Brother Toby's Friday Reflections go out to a large email list each week. In these uncertain times, his compelling voice challenges us to think in new ways and blesses us with kindness and optimism. His new edition of the Chinese classic, *THE TAO, THE SACRED WAY*, came out last year. Watch for updates about his latest projects including a new book and a compilation of favorite Friday Reflections from the past.



HOLIDAY ORDERS

Enclosed please find our new brochure. Our beautiful fresh wreaths have become a cherished tradition in many homes.



The inspirational books and luscious dried fruit we offer 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!



FOR GOOD EATING AND GOOD HEALTH

Experts agree that olive oil is one of the world's healthiest foods. And making it even better, Sister Julie's Extra Virgin Olive Oil is ORGANIC! Our prize-winning oil makes an excellent gift. Why is it so tasty? The fruit is cold pressed right here within hours of harvest. Better order soon - we may just sell out!

STARCROSS ~ Caring for the Earth and Its People



Starcross is a place of beauty and peace. Yes, it's an active organic farm. Equally important though is the work we do to maintain the land as sacred space for people who come here in search of solace. We try to make the world a better, kinder place. People often tell us they are glad we are here, doing what we do... So are we!

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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2018

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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 AIDS orphans in Romania and Uganda.