



STARCROSS
community

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Spring 2019

Sharings

Starcross Monastic Community Newsletter

Brother Toby: Protecting Islands of Peace

My cat Tigger has come in for the day and has arranged himself a few feet from me in the sunlight. He seems most happy. Looking out the window beyond him I see the kitchen garden filled with all sorts of things that will end up as a salad. They aren't supposed to be growing at this time of year but somehow they are, thanks to the efforts of my friend Lance and a number of young helpers. The birds love to walk around the plants perhaps thinking of more adventuresome summer activities. Nearby is a pine forest with a thick layer of pine needles.

Beyond the pines are rows of olive trees. They dance in the slightest breeze. Silver on the bottom, green on the top of each leaf. For me they are also teachers of history. They have survived in the most incredibly difficult places. I can remember when ours were harvested and I knew that people in many parts of the world were doing exactly the same thing and in the same way.

There are many birds out today. It is a cloudless day and the air is very fresh. Many of these birds survived the great wildfires to the north of us and came here, hopefully to live. They have different colors, different personalities, different songs, and probably different dreams. But they have found ways of living together.

Two little boys are playing. They don't speak the same language but that doesn't matter. A wise old dog watches over them. There is serious strife in our world but we also need to remember there are islands of peace around each of us. They are important. Let us protect them.



UPDATING THE ANCIENT TRADITION OF SANCTUARY

In 1996 at a time when national leaders were inappropriately responding to children and adults struggling with a major medical problem, we at Starcross were humbled by an award presented to us by the medical community of our region for providing a "loving update of the the ancient tradition of sanctuary." This is something that has always been in our DNA. Today some national leaders are responding to those fleeing from violence and harm at our borders in a way that is contrary to our basic sense of basic humanitarian ethics. Therefore, we are standing in solidarity with other spiritual centers who comprise the Sanctuary Movement to continue providing compassionate and practical alternatives for those in desperate need of help

PROJECTS IN UGANDA

When Starcross Kin Worldwide began caring for destitute AIDS orphans in Uganda the hope was that when some of the kids grew up, they would in turn help other poor children. Indeed that has happened.

Some projects which the House of Hope graduates have begun include a maternity center, a school, and a self-help initiative providing dairy cows to impoverished rural women. Many graduates went into medicine. Others are in technology, education and the trades.

Each AIDS orphan raised and educated at the House of Hope is a productive, employed citizen of Uganda. They have used well their opportunities to create a “bright future!”



ESL Class at the Farm House

LENDING A HAND

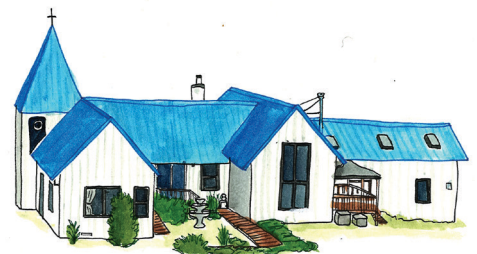
Starcross is perhaps best known for our “big projects” covered by the media – international AIDS work, popular books by Brother Toby, Conservation Easement. But our energy also goes into less dramatic ongoing efforts to be good neighbors. Things like growing an organic garden, running a Food Pantry for those in need, offering free English as a Second Language classes, providing sanctuary to homeless families, etc.

An old friend recently said, “*It was good to see you again, still trudging on your worthy journey to quietly uphold the earth and populace in this crumbling time.*” We find ourselves often just “being there” for people in personal or spiritual crisis. This is what we love to do. We are grateful for this beautiful healing place in which to live and work.

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



STARCROSS WELCOMES SPIRITUAL RESIDENTS

We want to support spiritual seekers. As an interfaith community, we invite folks from any spiritual background to join our life and work for a month or more. This can be a time of discernment, and mutual growth for everyone involved. If interested contact Sister Julie sj@starcross.org



Signing the Conservation Easement

SISTER JULIE LOVES OLIVES



At my childhood home, toast wasn't buttered. The family enjoyed "bruschetta" with olive oil. To this day, my breakfast is not complete without it.

My Dad had been an Italian POW working at a US base where my musician mom, a US WAC, was in charge of entertainment. Of course, they were not allowed to socialize. Obviously they did! Dad used to tell us that Mom captured him in the war.

Although I hadn't expected to be a farmer our Sonoma County land, so similar to Italy, seemed to call out for olive trees. It has been a challenge and a joy learning to grow and produce our wonderful olive oil. If you've not yet tried SISTER JULIE'S ORGANIC EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, you're in for a treat! Call 1-800-960-1500 or shop online www.starcross.org

STARCROSS PROTECTED FOREVER!

Our Conservation Easement with Sonoma Land Trust is now official! This is the result of years of work and the efforts of many people who believed in the value of preserving the land for the future, protecting it from over-development or intensive agriculture.

A conservation easement limits the property owners freedom with a variety of restrictions. So why did we do it?

To us it seemed like too many Redwood trees, which grow only a few places on earth, were being cut for industrial agriculture. We choose to let some forest grow naturally, to leave some open space for scenic views, to protect habitat for wildlife. We hope that other landowners might consider conservation easements as well.

PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH

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

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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SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

Inside this issue of SHARINGS:

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STARCROSS MONASTIC COMMUNITY

is a small, independent, interfaith 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.

