



THE WATER I WILL GIVE
SHALL BECOME
A FOUNTAIN OF WATER
SPRINGING UP
UNTO LIFE EVERLASTING

THE TEA CEREMONY by Nicholas

Everyone who comes to the monastery, whether as monk or guest, comes in search of something, searching perhaps for greater depth in life, searching for deeper meaning to existence, searching ultimately for God. The spiritual life is a search for Him who is at once everywhere and yet nowhere. He is a hidden God. To be one with Him is to enter His life and to transcend one's own self-consciousness, penetrating into the levels of pure consciousness.

A Zen monk once asked his master where he could find the ultimate meaning of life. The master answered:

'Look under your feet' The spiritual man is able to bridge the gap between space and time so that here and now, this place, this moment is of ultimate significance. We find the hidden God in everything, in every moment. But only the man who has learnt to savor the moment and enter into it fully is able to find Him there. Every moment requires that we be 'all there' so to speak, forgetting the past and ceasing to be anxious about the future. This is what the



Tea Ceremony aims to achieve; simply to savor the moment, forgetting everything but what is taking place, letting nothing escape our attention. Such a moment takes on an eternal dimension. It has something of the 'Now' of God in it which is beyond the limitations of time and space. Almost instinctively one sets 'me' aside to experience something of the true self, the 'I', which is all awareness, all consciousness. The ceremony lasts only for a few moments, but one feels one has scratched the surface of something profound.

Through an everyday activity, the making and drinking of a cup of tea, one has forgotten the grasping self. 'First empty your cup before it can be filled', was the advice of a tea master to an overbearing guest. Only then can one be filled with the gifts of harmony, tranquility, purity and reverence which the Tea Ceremony strives to cultivate. The empty man begins to discover



the essence of things, actions and persons, of life itself in the poverty of the setting, in the simplicity of means and in the graceful yet rational movements.

Only when we are at peace is our approach to reality simple and uncomplicated, like that of a child. Suddenly one notices things which ordinarily one would never notice: the sound of boiling water, the beauty of a flower, the fragrance of burning wood, the pleasing touch of a bowl, the taste of tea, the grace of bodily movements, the intimacy of a shared experience. For a brief moment one has broken the hold of material values upon life and has begun to realize that there is infinite depth beneath the surface of reality which is only waiting to be uncovered. This is no trivial experience for it is a moment of deep awareness, a moment when one is fully alive and truly human.

For many people today there is no other way to the enjoyment of life except that had by spending money and seeking excitement for excitement's sake. They no longer have the time or inclination to reflect on life, nor do they find it worth the effort to seek its inmost meaning. To these people the Art of Tea appears as an esoteric thing for it runs counter to our whole cultural pattern. What our complex cultural system ignores, despises and holds as valueless, it affirms.

We are grateful to Miss Aliza Mandel, student of the New York branch of the Urasenke Tea Ceremony Society, Kyoto, for her assistance in remodeling a room in our guesthouse which is illustrated. Here the art of living is experienced and practiced. We see the tea ceremony as a simple effort to give a new perspective to every day life, helping us to rediscover those human values which make living itself an art.

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The eighteenth annual Mount Saviour Fall Festival Celebration is scheduled for September 19th, 1971. You can help us by sending in trading stamps and hand-made items and items for the Street of Shops - anything from jams and jellies to teen booth items - all are welcome. If you have some other area where you would like to help out drop us a line; we will be glad to hear from you.

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There was one part of the day at Mount Saviour which I found most characteristic of what I was looking for at the Monastery, at least for me, a parish priest on leave of absence from my diocese. In the afternoon around the time for None there was a certain silence, a certain still point in which I felt centered and freed. Why then, more than other times? Perhaps because it was the time when working in the barn, or on the road, or in the house, in a simple obscure task, the 'self-important' ego had nothing to feed on. The 'wanting-to-feel-important' self gave up and one was at the Center of everything. The bell ringing for None said it all very simply. It called us around the altar to sing of Zion's deliverance from bondage, of men coming back from exile, of the Lord building a house for us and giving back wife,





father, mother, brethren, lands, a hundred fold and more.

I think these moments are at the heart of the whole cycle by which we are saved, the salvation for which I came in search. It is the Paschal cycle of salvation. The moment the Lord stands in your midst and says 'Peace be with you', you have experience of the great liberation which is Easter-resurrection. The vigils, the Eucharist, the silence, the hours of meditation, the presence of nature, the expanse of sky and stars are all preparations for the unexpected moment when the Lord makes himself present.

One of the great things that is happening to the Church today, especially in the priesthood, is that Christians are becoming more conscious of their need to be saved. The man of faith is the biblical man, the man who begins a journey, starts off on a road that is not mapped out, and has a terminal point that is beyond estimation. There are deserts to be traveled through, there are cities of confusion and interest in which to dwell and work, there are days of light, when the most natural expressions of self seem the order of things, then turn dark and confusing. One has to pass through them all, like the mole who begins his journey from the ground burrowing through the earth in search of the sun and seeing it, is blinded. But is it not that which we fear most - to live in blindness and emptiness, that is real? And now priests, nuns, youth, older people, realize that membership in an organization, certificates of baptism, ordination and profession do not equal salvation. It is much harder than that. A 'state in life' does not exempt us from the struggle to live and achieve inner freedom.

Here was I, a priest who had worked twelve years in his diocese, thirty-eight years old, without 'job', without future; all that was gone now. There was nothing left to judge what really was real except an obscure faith that there was a Center to it all, One who is Father, and the Way to the Father, Jesus. It was a matter of waiting, becoming calm and at peace with the breath in me and out of me; a matter of willing to live this breathing through the prayer: 'Jesus, have mercy on me.' My task was to reduce all this to one simple state, the need for salvation.

The monastery was a school in which I could learn and practice this: in the midst of us and in us the risen Lord breathes his breath of peace, so that we grow in the gentle, all-present love of the Father for us. It is very difficult to give up one's identity and to become the man dying

with Jesus and rising with Him, but it is the only way. Is that where the Church is being led more and more as forms of its institutional life die? Is it moving in the direction of groups of people who want to be saved, burrowing up from the darkness into the light? Is it moving in the direction of communities of faith witnessing to salvation in marriage or celibacy; people who will work gently and peacefully, immersed in the ground of the

world with its burdens? And so in the world of changing institutions, a priest from the Diocese of Brooklyn, could live the ancient tradition of the monk with the Community of Mount Saviour. In those four months I came to realize that this is the only work: salvation into light, and that the whole cycle consists of love whereby we are willing to walk with one another in the journey. That the monks were brothers to me in this journey, shared with me their prayer, their silence and work, this place becomes a holy place for me, an awesome place; it is part of my salvation and theirs.

Rev. William Frederickson



Mount Saviour Pine City, N.Y. 14871

Chronicle



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YOUNG GUESTS by Peter

Tony Walsh, one of our friends, wrote in a letter last September that 'there is a new wave emerging, the first wave of youth has pretty-well spent itself. The new wave, or at least a substantial segment, wants guidelines, a base and some kind of structure, and is in great search....' The winter brought groups from several colleges and universities studying monastic life as part of their academic program. They wanted to see how it works, not as sociologists or even as writers of essays, but as philosophers in the old sense - searchers. There is not much a monastic community such as ours can do for such seekers except to carry on our life, day after day, and let them live in the guest-houses nearby and take part as circumstances allow. The gain, and there certainly seems to be gain, remains something of a mystery to all parties. We are dealing here with God's ways of acting, of teaching, of drawing us to himself.

For the monks it is pleasing, though sometimes disconcerting, to find ourselves relevant. One March weekend brought 100 or so young people to a Council of Youth initiated by the brothers of Taizé. Sleeping bags, meals for 100 in St Joseph's, singing all night (to the cows) so as to be awake for Vigils at 4:30 - this is not our normal hospitality, but all went very well.

Also appearing new, though envisaged by Father Damasus from the founding of the monastery, is the presence of a few men spending weeks or months sorting out the strands of their lives, and

seeking to know themselves. They find in the rhythm of prayer and work and reading proposed by St Benedict in his Rule 1500 years ago the freedom which comes from discipline. They have no thought of becoming monks, but there are certain habits, as of deliberating decisions, meditating or ruminating (like our cows) what is read, pondering the meaning of what is happening around one, responding to the movements of sun and moon, the sky and land, that are fostered by the routines of a regular life. To monks, who believe wholeheartedly in their value, above all today, the chance to communicate them is a source of hope and joy.

