



MARYMOUNT HERMITAGE NEWSLETTER

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Volume 39, No. 9

September, 2022

MY PLANS ARE MY PLANS

By Earl Bohn

For four of the five years that I have been traveling from Pittsburgh to Cascade Lake near Donnelly, ID, to train as a competitive rower I have wanted to trek by bicycle from Boise to the site of the sculling clinic. I made a plan and tried to put it into action in July 2021. The plan did not work. This July I tried again but my plan fell apart after 100 miles of the 150-mile trek. I got as far as the Marymount Hermitage in

Mesa, seven miles south of Council. That is where one planned day of rest turned into four days filled with prayer, worship, singing, reading, conversation and grace, and I am the better for it.

I booked flights and reserved rooms in 2021. Day one of the ride was to be 70 miles from Boise on mostly level ground westward along U.S. Route 26 and north along U.S. 95 to Weiser. Day 2 was to be 45 miles further north on U.S. 95, up two tall, steep ridges, through Cambridge and on to the Marymount Hermitage. The hermitage appealed as an overnight stop because the rate is only \$60 per night and its location is an appropriate distance from Weiser and only one mile from the mouth of National Forest Road 186. This packed gravel forest development road was to be the last leg of my trek: only 35 miles of biking but isolated from water, food and assistance and ascending 3,150 feet to No Business Mountain before plunging to my destination on the western shore of Cascade Lake.



The Weiser-Cambridge-Marymount route is half again as long as the direct route -- Idaho 55 directly north from Boise for about 100 miles. It saved me, however, from becoming the jerk on the bicycle infuriating drivers, their patience already shortened by highway construction, in the skinny mountain pass where the pavement is so narrow that vehicles, always numerous and tightly packed, cannot pass a bicycle without risk of a side-view mirror smacking a helmet or a handlebar tip.

The Idaho wildfires of 2021 forced me to run a reality check. As an old newsman I said to myself, "Earl, write the headline." It read, "Fire from Long-Predicted Lightning Traps 70-year-old Man on Solo, Unsupported Bicycle Trek in Tinder-Dry Payette National Forest." I informed Sr. Mary Beverly at Marymount Hermitage by email that I would not be coming and noted in passing that I had imagined the 911 dispatcher receiving my rescue call, muttering to himself, "That much stupid is too much stupid," and deciding to wander away from his desk in search of a coffee rather than dispatch tired, scarce and greatly overworked first responders. I had imagined correctly, Sister replied, except for one detail; the dispatcher was a she, not a he, a fact that Sister knew because the dispatcher's father had built the hermitage's new library.



Mercy House: library and house of hospitality

No major wildfires were burning this July, so I proceeded. When I rolled into Cambridge at noon on the second day of biking I realized that my rear tire was flat. I was hot. The temperature was approaching 100 degrees. I had only 15 miles remaining,

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but mostly uphill. I judged that the 30 miles I had covered that day represented substantial compliance with the challenge I had set before myself. I hired a ride to Marymount. While disappointed at conceding defeat regarding the last 15 miles of the day, I knew that I had a spare inner tube and a tire patch kit in my bike bags, and the challenge of NF 186 awaited. An hour after I reached Cambridge, Sr. Mary Beverly was showing me to my cottage – hermitage as she calls it -- and inviting me to join her for evening Vespers in the chapel.

To my bitter disappointment the spare inner tube was useless to me because the valve stem was too short to reach through the new carbon fiber wheels on my bike. When I picked up the bike from servicing only days before I flew to Boise, I bought a new tube from my favorite bike technician specifically for this ride. He had sold and fitted the new carbon fiber wheels. He knew they required a 40 mm valve stem. With my very own eyes I had watched his hand rise to a shelf and choose the tube I brought to Idaho. Now I was stuck for four days until fellow rowers would arrive in Boise and could swing by the hermitage and fetch me over to Cascade Lake. I felt cheated, and I was mad.

Then, as though a hand had passed over me, my disappointment turned to joy at the first Vespers service I attended with Sister. As we would for the next three days at morning Lauds and evening Vespers, we prayed together silently and aloud. We knelt and stood. We read scripture in unison. We sang hymns of praise and supplication to God. We talked. We laughed. We ate a meal together. Lauds and Vespers became the highlights of my day. I awoke each dawn to absolute quiet and fulsome peace. I made coffee

and stood outdoors in the cool morning air and marveled at the vast land spread before me -- dry, rugged draws and



ridges, rolling high plains that reached to the horizon. During my days at the hermitage I spent a long period in the cool, quiet library exploring titles, reading



and studying. I prepared simple meals in my cottage and enjoyed my food for its simplicity and goodness. I hid indoors during the afternoons from the blazing sun and the hot air. I slept like the innocent.

When my ride arrived on the afternoon of the fourth day I felt cheated again but this time not because I was staying but because I was leaving the peaceful company of Sr. Mary Beverly. A member of the Hermit Sisters of Mary, she is a woman so blessed by God after more than 50 years of service as a nun that grace emanates from her countenance and is almost palpable to those who travel to Marymount Hermitage specifically for spiritual retreat and even to those whose plans fall apart and get stuck there.

The experience is a reminder that my plans are my plans. They are not the plans of Him who made me. His are better.

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Sister Mary Beverly, HSM

RIP: Michael E. Nourse died on September 2 and his funeral Mass was at St. Agnes Church in Weiser, ID on September 9. Thank you to all of you who prayed for our neighbor and friend. If you want to read his obituary, this is the link: <https://lienkaemper-thomason.com/tribute/details/293641/Michael-Nourse/obituary.html#content-start> I am working on a memorial article to honor Mike in the October newsletter. Please stay tuned.

RENOVATION COMPLETE: The exterior and interior of St. Francis hermitage (building #1) was completed on August 24. I am grateful for all who worked on this project. This is the last of the first five modular, which are now 40 years old. The work was long overdue and is a relief to have finished finally. I want to thank Lesley Morisse for her thoughtful donation of a beautiful

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The MARYMOUNT HERMITAGE NEWSLETTER is published by Marymount Hermitage, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation in the State of Idaho. The Hermit Sisters of Mary are a canonically approved, Catholic community of women hermits, following the Rule of St. Benedict. The newsletter is published each month by the 15th on our website only. The purpose of the newsletter is to share the spirituality and material progress of Marymount Hermitage. Please pray that we may be faithful to our way of life in prayer and penance, solitude and silence for the sake of the Church and the world. Donations are sincerely appreciated and are tax-deductible. Thank you in advance to those who have remembered Marymount Hermitage in their wills. God bless you!

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image of St. Francis for this hermitage named for him. This building also has a statue of the patron saint outside near the corner of the work shop.



Notice the new brown metal roof and new porch.



The porch is made of pressure treated timbers with spindles of red wood. The ramp was repaired and now has a new brown indoor/outdoor carpet.



curtains for the windows, which I hope to finish this winter. The window blinds are new. The walls are newly plastered and painted and the flooring is new.



This is Lesley's favorite image of St. Francis and I love it too, but had never seen it before.

Below are photos of the bedroom (R) and the bathroom. In the past, the ceiling in the bathroom had leaked and was damaged. This has been repaired and the

ceiling of the entire building is newly painted.



God bless all who donated to this necessary work.

HERMITAGE RETREAT: Plan now for a fall or Advent retreat. The calendar is open for some days in October and all of November and most of December. Listen to your heart and discover the voice of Jesus calling you. Give him the gift of your presence.

GIFT SHOP: This is a reminder that you can view handmade items in this section of the website. You can place orders by US mail, emails or phone calls. Locals are welcome to visit in person. Today I will feature the CD of original music composed by Sister Rebecca Mary for her sung versions of some of the psalms in Hebrew. The CD has a booklet which is in the case and gives the English translations. The title of the CD is *Hosanna* and the cost is \$15 plus shipping and 6% sales tax for Idaho residents.

LOST & FOUND: If you were on retreat recently and stayed in St. Helen's hermitage, did you leave your eye glasses in the chapel mail box?

OCTOBER 15 DAY OF PILGRIMAGE: See the Calendar of Events for information to register soon.