

INSCAPE March 2013

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

May you always be consciously aware of the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love and mercy of God the Father, and the communion of the Life-Giving Holy Spirit dwelling within your heart!

INTRODUCTION

Familiar to all of us, “escape” means “to flee”, “the avoidance of reality” or “to evade by going out-of-reach of a person”. “*Inscape*”, coined by the English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89), represents the “outward reflection of the inner nature of a thing”. In 1886 he defined *inscape* as “the individually-distinctive beauty” of each creature.

We are all searching for a new, vibrant spirituality that will replace an exhausted one that all too often encouraged us to “escape” from our human situation and involvement in the material world around us to find God vertically in an ethereal, “spiritual” relationship that denigrated the mystery of the Incarnation. *Inscape* describes a spirituality posited on asceticism and contemplation that allows us to find God easily at the heart of matter. God truly invades us and our material world at all times by His Uncreated Energies of love. How can we see Him everywhere?

Initiated in 1982, Reverend Father George A. Maloney (1924-2005) published a newsletter entitled “*Inscape*”. He used the word *Inscape* to suggest this contemplative attitude of Christians going inside of matter to find there the Uncreated Energies of the Immanent Trinity, loving and serving us unto our healing and joy. Once a month, [ten months per year for seventeen years, with its demise in June of 1998], he prepared teachings on the nature, quality and character of contemplative prayer and the Christian spiritual life for those who are not beginners in prayer, but rather for souls who have already developed a disciplined prayer life and are now seeking a more matured form of prayer. Many of you have become discouraged and are afraid to go deeper into prayer. Some need encouragement to seek out others of like interest in prayer to come together to study, share and pray.

I am privileged and honored as well as blessed to write and continue to publish this style newsletter and offer it to you as a service. Fr. Maloney bequeathed to me all his copyrighted publications and personal unpublished poems, video and audio cassettes, and unpublished manuscripts to be utilized as I desire. I should use and modify the main lines of his thinking, his 65 books and his articles in many Christian journals, *Inscape* newsletters, *Diakonia* editorials of almost two decades, his teachings, retreats, and above all, our family’s personal contact with him throughout our lives together...to share and make available...as if it were my own. I should “weave around all these resources with an Eastern Christian approach that would be most enlightening for both Orthodox and Roman Catholics, as well as other Christians (who know so little about the Christian East). It might even appeal to Jews and Muslims”. Once asked, “is it difficult to write so many books”? Fr. George responded, “I do not write books, the Holy Spirit writes books”!

When I suggested to him I write his biography, his immediate and firm answer was “under obedience, do NOT write my biography”. “Naturally my deep humility put up all sorts of red flags with seeming protests that I and my life would have nothing of interest for anyone but you and me”. Just continue to preach and teach the Truth of Christianity. Truth is a Person, the Only-Begotten Son of God, the Second Person of the Consubstantial Holy Undivided Trinity, Who became Incarnate through the Holy Spirit, and the ever-Holy, ever-Pure, ever-Blessed and Glorious Lady, the Birth-Giver of God and Ever-Virgin Mary. When you purify your life through repentance, you will see God with your earthly eyes and your spiritual eyes of the heart, and experience Him in all His creation both visible and invisible, rational and irrational.

“All” is in Christ! Therefore, [A.T.B.T.G.], All Thanks Be To God! As Saint Paul reminds us; Thank God: Always, and Everywhere, and in Everything. All Glory, Thanksgiving and Worship, to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Spirit, always now and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

It is through the Creed of the Undivided Church of Christ and its Ecumenical Councils of the first eight centuries, and teachings of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church rooted in Sacred Tradition, Holy Scripture, and the writings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, Mystics of the Christian East and West, that we moderns may come to know the revelation of Jesus Christ as He is the only way to the Father. “No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Only by means of Orthodoxy (the true, the original and customary teaching of beliefs, attitudes, and worship concerning liturgical, theological and religious doctrine) can Orthopraxis (right and proper conduct) be comprehended.

Let us begin to “*Inscape*”. Withdraw to our inner closet and pray in Spirit and Truth. “But as for you, when you pray, enter into your inner chamber and lock your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly” (Matt 6:6). One must proceed “inside” oneself to that deepest down placeless place, the core of your being, what Scripture calls the “heart”, that “Stillpoint”, and discover the Indwelling Trinity abiding there. “...The Kingdom of God does not come by observation. Neither will they say, Behold, it is here! Or, behold, it is there! For behold, the Kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20-21). Let us seek this treasure, the one thing needful, the pearl of great price that lives within every person. “For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart” (Luke 12:34).

God knows the spiritual hunger and thirst existing among all His people. Do you believe that ordinary human beings are searching for a spiritual guide? Searching for a more meaningful prayer discipline while demanding of their pastors a deeper understanding and teaching of the spiritual life? Or do you consider that your spiritual efforts cannot be improved? As a True Christian, are you answering the call of Our Lord Jesus Christ to be His disciple, a saint, a mystic, and a contemplative? Or do you feel these callings are for everyone but yourself? Where does one begin to not only mentally respond to these invitations of Christ, but to actively enter the “daily living out” the Word of God? Only through the out pouring of faith, hope and love by the Holy Spirit deep with our hearts can we realize the answers to these most demanding questions. Where do we begin? So much to do! So much to be! Now, it is the time of salvation—and we must begin. Let us get growing and maturing spiritually together in the Body of Christ, from Glory to Glory! “It is later than you think. Hasten, therefore, to do the work of God”.

I have prayed much before deciding to launch this newsletter. What, another newsletter? Beginning on April 1, 2013, the feast day of Saint Mary of Egypt, and continuing monthly, I will make available to all who are interested in “learning of” and “living out” the authentic Christian Contemplative Mode of Being and to further develop their prayer life, the newly resurrected monthly newsletter *Inscape*. April’s topic, “Are you called to be a contemplative? Prompted by the Holy Spirit, may everyone make some quality time available to share with others their personal discernment of *Inscape* in their life. Feel free to print these newsletters and keep them in a binder. Refer to them and pray through them.

You know I am not looking for more work! But I humbly offer myself and request any alms love-offering from those of you who wish to further my outreach through Stillpoint Contemplative Ministries, Inc. a (501)(c)(3) organization, which donations may be made at the bottom of our home-page at www.stjoseph-standrew.org.

Prayerfully yours in the Spirit of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ,

Fr. John Michael Zboyovski (March 18, 2013; The beginning of the Holy Fast of Great Lent)