

Martin P. Gutekunst

December 15, 1957 ~ January 7, 2017 (age 59)



The obituary from the funeral home:

Martin Paul Gutekunst, 59, of Ickesburg passed away Saturday, January 7, 2017 in Carolyn Croxton Slane Residence, Harrisburg.

Born December 15, 1957 in Reading, he was the son of the late Paul and Kathryn (Herbein) Gutekunst.

He was a computer programmer and a member of St. Bernard Catholic Church, New Bloomfield.

Surviving are his children Megan Gutekunst and David Gutekunst; sister Betsy Bierkamp; grandsons Rowen and Ayden Gutekunst.

A Memorial Mass will be held 11:00 AM Thursday, January 12, 2017 at Holy Name of Jesus Roman Catholic Church, 6150 Allentown Boulevard, preceded by a visitation beginning at 10:00 AM.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Buse Funeral Home, 9066 Jonestown Road, Grantville, PA 17028 to defray funeral expenses or Dauphin County 4-H, Inc., 1451 Peters Mountain Road, Dauphin, PA 17018.

From Martin's last postings in the Journals

Oct 13, 2016: Contemplation vs Action

Prior to starting this month study I started reading Thomas Merton on St. Bernard. There are two chapters in this book I find particularly applicable to what we were discussing. I hope to share these in upcoming journal entries.

from the text:

"Even though the monastic life may be essentially contemplative, in the sense that it is centered directly on God, the active life is not banned from the monastic enclosure and when it is properly understood by no means constitutes an infidelity to the monastic Vocation. Activity has its place in the monastic life. To begin with, according to the traditional meaning of the term, the active life is first of all the life of virtue and of penance which is necessarily preparation for contemplative prayer."

I see contemplation that of pure prayer, action charity to others,

Later ... "The term active life also embraces the necessary labors and duties of the monastic community."

Our community whatever that may be ...

Later ... "The contemplative life is in itself better than the active life and is always to be sought by us in preference to the active life. In other words, for St. Bernard the contemplative life is both speculatively and practically preferable to the active life in all senses of that term. However it is not necessarily superior to the apostolic life."

This bothered me ... but ...

"The apostolic life cannot help but be slightly stained with the dust of the world. It cannot avoid all solicitude, all misery, or all failure, and it is therefore fall short of the perfection demanded for union. However, in practice in St. Bernard would deny the apostolic to any but true contemplative these souls these souls enjoy, full recover their perfect purity when they return to that contemplation which gives meaning and value to their own life as well as to their apostolate."

The strong contemplative prayer life being the core , the way to survive the challenges of the active life. How many times I see Jesus retreating from the crowds

Sometimes it is in pure exhaustion, sometimes it is in pure joy ... resting in Christ

From Oct 7, 2016: Experience of God

This to me is the most important component of the Cistercian charism. This is nurtured in solitude, supported through the LOH and contemplation. The Rule guides us with ascetic practices calling us to humility. This strengthens our ability to live in community sharing the blessings of Cistercian charism with others.

From August 19, 2016: Isaiah

The readings the other morning from Isaiah give us such colorful language describing the hope the joy of the experience of God and Jesus the Savior.

One of the chat participants the other day referenced the fact that she wished she had been born or lived in medieval times. As I read many of our church fathers I realize how much they are blessed by being able to spend so much time in reading Isaiah and many of the prophets producing so much beautiful reflection on these readings.

The true fruits of many many hours of contemplation of listening to God, the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

Perhaps this is the community that I seek at Conversi. Those who with the Holy Spirit are called to contemplate these ancient mysteries expressed through our fathers but yet also very practical way expressed through our times. I share with you why. In my barn the past few days popping up and down on your right goal: praising God. Something I need at those times heading to the barn in the heat of the day to feed and tend the flocks. What joy!

On Wednesday visiting a garden of experimental plants watching a yellow butterfly go from bloom to bloom slowly moving its wings up and down as it digests the sweetness from the blooms. So is our lectio, our times of reflection of the Word.

From August 16, 2016: This afternoon:

Have had a rough series of events these past few days ... even this morning.. part of my reason of moving where I am is to, frankly, get away from a lot of people. I confess I have a neighbor who seems to have a sole purpose of mowing grass as short as it can be mowed coming onto my land on several occasions to the point where there are bare marks.

This afternoon's chat gave me a real sense of a community with a common purpose ... discussing a common theme ... celebrating our common beliefs... nice ...

oops another rain storm coming and the sheep need to be checked