



Notre Dame de Sion

“SAINT JOHN IN MONTANA”

Congregational Novitiate Jerusalem

Ein Karem, Monday, 02 March 2015

Dear All

The month of February began with a three-day session on “Non-violent Communication” with Fr. Guy Theunis, using the teachings of Marshall Rosenberg. Fr. Don Anderson continued that week with a session on managing fear and anger. The destructiveness of fear and anger along with its positive power was an eye-opener for us.

Fr. Guy began by encouraging us to be realistic and to see that we live in a world of violence. Violence is a reality of daily life in families, in schools, and elsewhere. We are born into a violent world and violence appears to be normal behaviour. Non-violence is not normal; we have to begin to learn non-violence. Modern non-violent communication and behaviour is founded on the wisdom and example of Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, but Jesus might be seen as the master in non-violence.

We learned that “jackal / wolf language” and “giraffe language” indicate ways of behaving and acting, and we can find in them illustrations of our own behaviour. The first rule of non-violent communication is not to judge the other, but to gain insights about ourselves. In our community activity we visited the Zoo of Jerusalem and were astonished to watch the giraffe with its gentle, graceful way of walking and moving about. The giraffe is able to live in community with other giraffes but also with rhinoceroses and ostriches and others. How different is the behaviour of the jackal, who can live only with its own kind of jackals! So it was not only with Fr. Guy, that we learned about giraffe language and jackal language in daily communications!

Br. Elio shared with us his thinking on the call of the church and the call of the Sisters and Brothers of Notre Dame de Sion within the church. He invited us to think of Sion as solidly situated within the Church, whose foundation is in Judaism, and consequently, so much of the life and the liturgy of the early Church were influenced by Judaism. With Mark Walsh we continued to explore, through the month of February, the relationship between Christianity and Judaism in our shared Scriptures. When Christians and Jews talk about their Sacred Scripture, do they mean the same thing? That was the basic question.

Sr. Anne Catherine shared with us her love of Shabbat and what she has learned about it from Jewish tradition. We had the privilege of participating in the opening of Shabbat on a Friday evening, with a Jewish Family. Sr. Martine, who is a sister of Sion in the contemplative community at Ein Karem, shared with us her way of praying within contemplative community life.

Some of us had some health issues this month and so doctors' visits to take care of one or other of us became almost a daily routine. We began to watch our diet to make sure that we are eating a lot of green vegetables and fruit. The regular routine of our daily life was interrupted by a trip to Tel Aviv for the purpose of obtaining the visas we will need for our community experiences in other countries. Our guest this

month were the sisters of Sion from the Beit Ruth Community, and at another occasion we had the pleasure of welcoming in our house the Consul General of Guatemala and his wife.

We started Lent by making the Way of the Cross, with prayerful pauses at different places in our house or in the garden, remembering various intentions that need prayer, such as migrants around the world but specially the migrants living in Israel. For the second week we chose children, as our theme for this prayer, and in the coming weeks we will pray with the theme of women. Working in the garden, organising our library, as well as our daily tasks of cooking, cleaning and laundry help to keep us in good shape physically; watching our weekly movie helps to keep our sense of humour and the muscles we use for laughing in good shape too!

Greetings and Blessings

Sr. Juliana
Community "St. John in Montana"