



Journal

July 2009



STARCROSS COMMUNITY

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IT'S SUMMERTIME. IS THE "LIVING EASY" YET?

From about age 17 on most of us, I assume, had been on an upward journey of endless possibilities. Sometime in old age we would expect to encounter dire moments, such as hearing "the diagnosis," and we would find ourselves in a different landscape. That is not quite how it is working out is it?

Authors like Richard Rodriguez talk about becoming members of a different nation — the bright-eyed 17 year-old is replaced by the vulnerable, the injured, the struggling. And even when we hear great news: "We caught the cancer in time!" "Your kid's going to graduate," "You've got enough money to weather this meltdown," we still belong to that nation of the wounded. And we sense as never before the commonness between us. We all are invited to become, as my late friend Henri Nouwen put it, "wounded healers."

Who knows what to do when a 20 year-old American college junior with AIDS says she feels so alone she is considering suicide? When the family next door reveals they are sinking in debt? When someone from your high school class is trying to cope with life as her husband slips into dementia? You have your own experience with issues like these. What can any of us do? Sometimes the most important thing we can do is reassuring them that they are not alone because of their troubles, acknowledging that there is a common bond between us.

When things a person never thought would happen to her do happen, the unreal becomes real. Or does it? Is arguing with a bank clerk about a deceased parent's account real? No. Feeling her grief and sitting in her mother's garden is real. Crap is not real — there's a mantra or a bumper sticker! But it is true.

This may not be among our carefree summers but there is a reality here that will keep us whole. One morning in 1863, as the sunlight crept down the streets of Amherst, Massachusetts, Emily Dickinson looked out of her upstairs bedroom window and demanded :

Answer July
Where is the Bee –
Where is the Blush -
Where is the Hay? ...

July is a very physical month and she wanted those sounds, sights, and smells. Our world is alive and we should enjoy it for its own sake!

Our problems are not the whole of our world. Emily wrote this poem in the bloody reality of the Civil War. As in her time, we have been wounded but we can remind ourselves that around us the fruit is swelling, everything is growing. Let us join the poet at her window and listen for those bees, search out those streaks of red, savor that smell of new-cut grass!

Your brother,
Toby



FARMER FOR A DAY!

Volunteer work days are becoming a way to connect with friends and for friends to help us with the many tasks needing to be done. The next work day is scheduled for **July 25 from 10 am to 4 pm**. We will provide lunch.

Recent projects volunteers have helped with include: planting lavender, filling and labeling olive oil bot-

tles, painting a fence, building a greenhouse, making labels for memorial olive trees, and countless other tasks.

If you would like to join us call (1-800-960-1500) or e-mail Sister Julie (sj@starcross.org) and we will send you directions. It takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours to drive here from Santa Rosa, but it is a beautiful trip and we would love to have you join us. Unfortunately we cannot accommodate pets or small children. Whatever your level of physical (or mental!) ability, there is something helpful to be done. We look forward to seeing you.



From Sister Marti:

Holly and I just spent the morning harvesting lavender blossoms to infuse into our body oil. It is wonderful to work with — you smell like lavender all day.

Now, to business. If you want more information on anything email me sm@starcross.org. These e-journals are sent only to those who have provided us with their e-mail address. If you want to unsubscribe click [here](#) and write “unsubscribe” as the subject community@starcross.org.

We really appreciate your support. If you would like to make a contribution on-line now, please click the button on the cover letter, and thank you.

We are grateful you are there.



GOLD MEDAL WINNER!

Sister Julie has just learned that “Sister Julie’s Olive Oil” won a Gold Medal at the Los Angeles Olive Oil competition, the largest and most prestigious in the country!

We will have an olive oil tasting at the Starcross barn, Labor Day, Monday **September 7, from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm.**

“Sister Julie’s Olive Oil” is grown and pressed at Starcross from a blend of Tuscan olives, and is gaining acclaim wherever it is tasted. In addition to the Gold Medal in Los Angeles,

it has received medals from the California Olive Oil Council and the Sonoma County Fair.

Join us on September 7 in the barn at 34500 Annapolis Road in Annapolis, to taste for yourself this oil from olives grown naturally and without harmful products on the peaceful Starcross hillsides. Stock up and save the shipping cost, or buy ahead for holiday gifts. If your are looking for a premium oil that is rich and fruity and pungent with a long, full finish — you will love this oil. It complements any meal.

If you can’t wait to taste this great oil, just print out this order form, or call, fax, or e-mail us and we will send you off a bottle.

TO ORDER call toll-free 1-800-960-1500 or fill out this form and mail to the address below, or fax to 707-886-1921, or e-mail to community@starcross.org.

Please send me ____ 375 ml bottles of *Sister Julie’s Olive Oil* @ \$22.50 each \$ _____
Shipping: @ \$8 for 1 bottle, \$10 for 2, \$11 for 3, \$12 for 4. _____
Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

- I enclose a check
 Charge my Visa, MasterCard, or American Express _____

Expiration _____ Signature _____

Thank You! We appreciate your support.

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