



Spring/Summer/Fall 2005 *

Dear Friends of Our Lady of Victory and me Holly,

Ever since this summer when I “turtle-fed” my life, I have been contemplating this letter and newsletter. I am sure you have long forgotten by now, but I had told you that I would drop this letter by or email it to you before I departed for the sanctuary. So just like a turtle, I’m slowly crossing the finish line.

The challenge was in determining what information to share with you, so you wouldn’t be overwhelmed, bored or shocked. Then if you were truly interested in knowing more, you would have that opportunity by going to **sjbes’** website www.projecthaven.com/sjbes. As a friend, I want you to know what I’m doing because we are friends, and this is what friends do – they share their lives, hopes, sorrow, joys and dreams.

The objectives I had hoped to achieve when composing this newsletter (which will be on the website) are fourfold:

- To share my reasons for living and working **sjbes’** sanctuary *Our Lady of Victory’s Desert Solitaire* in San Juan County, Utah (located at Cross Canyon and Montezuma Creek by Hovenweep National Monument) for 2005-06);
- To give you directions for finding me and Our Lady’s Sanctuary and to give you some idea of what to expect when you come to visit us;
- To share with you the background, philosophy, mission, activities and projects of **sjbes’** nonprofit, non-denominational organization; and
- To share my personal history and philosophy as a friend, and educator, and a lady of Desert Solitaire.

Only out of love as your friend, do I want you to be a part of Our Lady’s mission and purpose. It is “LOVE” that “...we come here for”. No, not the love that has and still is defined by this world, but real LOVE – the love that heals us, completes us and makes us whole. Ever since the beginning of time the world has been cold and indifferent to this real LOVE, but it will be through our unselfish service, charity, mercy and forgiveness with each other that real LOVE will manifest, so as to give us the will to transcend the world’s pain and suffering, and to be once again empowered in making “something beautiful for God”.

sjbes' Sanctuary is situated on 10 acres of semi-arid land which has been donated to **sjbes'** nonprofit, nondenominational organization for the purpose of carrying out its mission, activities and projects. The sanctuary is surrounded by the Navajo Nation and BLM land with an unlimited supply of water that comes from a natural, aqua spring. The landscape is rich in artifacts, fossils and natural wilderness, affording the sanctuary a prime universe (an open campus "so-to-speak") for study, contemplation, prayer, and fun. Based upon the psychology of Gestalt Therapy, the open space surrounding the sanctuary naturally provides healing for the mind, body and soul. Taking from the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, there are infinite possibilities when using the four elements – **earth, fire, water, air** for manifesting purpose and reason. As Mother Teresa of Calcutta would often say, "I have chosen to create "something beautiful for God". Within **sjbes'** vision - Her Holy Gardens encompasses vegetables, fruit, flowers, and herb gardens at Desert Solitaire in honor of Our Lady's victory with all God's holy creatures of HIS Heavenly Court in manifesting God's Divine Plan.

Our Lady of Victory's Desert Solitaire provides a space for healing the wounded spirit, for finding refocus and redirection, and for contemplating God, life and self without being distracted by our modern world. If you are not the camping type, and would still like to visit, you can do it by using the quaint and humble accommodations of the southwestern town of Bluff, Utah which is approximately 30 minutes from Our Lady's sanctuary www.bluffutah.org. You can venture out and explore during the day, while using Bluff's lodging at night. (You can consider it the Hilton of camping, while not having to sleep in a tent.)

My purpose for this coming year is to begin working on this vision in hopes of turning the 10 acres into a functioning resource that will serve **sjbes' Mission**, activities and projects in the Light of Christ for "making something beautiful for God" while I play, study, sing/dance, draw/sculpture/write, meditate/pray and heal. The sanctuary will be used as a resource for **sjbes'** School(s), and Support Programs, as well as for individuals, groups and organizations looking to develop **physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional** and **social** growth through **challenge, commitment, community** and **courage**.

The sanctuary will be a resource for **sjbes'** community school(s) as an important tool for teaching liberal arts, Christian based curriculum for all students in preschool through 12th grades. It will also be a resource for **sjbes'** Support Programs that serve people with special needs achieve their goals and objectives as defined by their individual plans, as well as in assisting the client/student in being accepted and included as productive citizens for local, national and global communities.

My goal for this 2005-06 year is to start preparing the land so the sanctuary can manifest into a safe and therapeutic space for the 'poor in Spirit' needing to find healing and nurturing for their wounded souls through **Our Lady's Divine Mercy, Beauty, Wisdom, Truth, Love and Order**. Hopefully the sanctuary will continue developing now and in the future as a resource for all school and support programs; as well as a place where friends like us can spend quality time together "making something beautiful for God" – even if it is just to hike, bike build, create, teach or to share stories about the Ancient Ones as we bask in the sun or around the camp fire, drinking a cup of tea or a few cold brews, or maybe to just share a dish or a hug or two. Whatever the reasons one has for coming to visit the sanctuary, my hope will be that we will all find the solitude embraced by Our Lady of Victory - as we journey the spiritual path in seeking the holiness for becoming worthy of Her Son's promises.

Our Lady of Victory's Desert Solitaire is located in Cross Canyon at Montezuma Creek (the creek not the town) by Hatch Trading Post in San Juan County, Utah. It is by the Four Corners Monument and Hovenweep National Monument – northeast of Blanding and Bluff bordering on the Navajo Nation. The sanctuary is by the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. For the time being, the sanctuary will be opened during the months of August throughout April. I'm hoping that someday we'll be opened year round. (Go to **sjbes'** website for updates.)

I hope that you'll venture out and find Our Lady's Desert Solitaire. If you do come, and I am not there, Our Lady will be there with Her Infant Christ Child, my Lord, welcoming you with unconditional love and forgiveness. So please feel free to stay and make yourself at home. Don't forget to sign in at the blue kiosk (see **How to Find Our Lady on sjbes' website**). You can also contact me by doing one of the following:

Write to: **sjbes' Mission** PO Box 58, Blanding, Utah 84511 (Please include a self-addressed envelope)

OR

Email me at sjbes@hotmail.com

Throughout this 2005-06 year, my itinerary will be to leave Moab on Sundays around 1pm and be down at the sanctuary Mondays through Thursdays, and come back to Moab on Thursday nights except when seminars or workshops extend into the weekend. When I am in Moab (or when visiting my other communities*), I'll be doing one of the following:

- Visiting with you,
- Writing for "gift & kind" funding/donations at Grand County Library
- Working at Seekhaven's Woman Shelter Friday and Saturday days
- Helping Susie Stengel at Nichols Expeditions now and through the end of September
- Practicing with the St. Pius X's choir on Friday evenings
- Drinking a cold brew or two at the local tavern or at your house on Saturdays
- Singing at 9 AM Mass on Sundays.

So I hope to see you at one of these places or activities, and if not, I'll be keeping you in my prayers, asking Our Lady of Victory, the Holy Family, all the Holy Angels, Apostles, and the Saints to intercede for us at the right hand of God so that we too, may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

During these past few months, I confess that I have felt feelings of doubt, especially in those silent judgments like "Is she crazy!!" These present moments make me a bit weak behind the knees, while forming little beads of perspiration on the top of my nose. My new mantra is "Hold the tension for this too will pass and hold onto HIS Holy Cross with all your strength – heart, mind and soul." So far all this has been very humbling to be at the mercy of God's Love...yet through the HIS Grace and Love, I am so very grateful to be here at this point of my life, and while I become more and more conscious about my moving out into the unknown life of poverty, obedience, chastity and open space, I feel the abundant joy as I reach out to God.

I can only imagine what you're feeling about this new phase of my life which I've come to accept with great zeal. At times I couldn't help but sense your fears, worries and doubts, which would only make me a bit uneasy because I would never want to cause my friend any sorrow or dis-stress. Please trust that God will take good care of me as He molds me into HIS Divine Love.

Like the 'belay system' of climbing...we are not to look down only up trusting in the 'belay system' until we get to the top. Substituting this with just "let go" of what is familiar (man and Man's World), and unconditionally trust in the unknown (God and God's World). When St. Peter got out of the boat and walked upon the water towards Jesus, he too fell into doubt and started to sink. Yet in his fear, he stretched out his arms and yelled, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus save me." You bet Satan is just waiting for me to fall back into the dark of my cave by doubting my Catholic faith and God's Incarnate Word, which would put me at risk in missing the opportunity to personally experience God's Holy Mysteries and "...for making something beautiful for Our Lady's Victory." "My GRACE will be sufficient," says my Lord. Pray my friend that I'll be humbled to stretch out my hands to my devoted and loyal Lord

and call upon His Holy Name in my time of doubt and weakness. “At the name of Jesus, every knee will bow; every tongue confess HIM, King of Glory now.”

Five weeks of staging a house and yard sale in the hottest time of summer was an incredible feat, and thanks to God’s GRACE and to friends like you, I did it! By the way, the family who is renting the house are awesome. They are from price, and Brian will be teaching at Grand County High School. If you get a chance, please stop by the house and introduce yourself. So again thank you for all your prayers, gifts and donations that were selflessly given to **sjbes’** and to me. May God bless you. I look forward to hearing or seeing you soon, where hopefully you’ll be open to sharing your thoughts and heart’s desires with me as I have just done with you here in this newsletter.

If you are interested in reading Our Lady of Victory’s newsletters, you may go to **sjbes’** website at www.projecthaven.com/sjbes and print it yourself. The website is under construction as it will be for some time, but you’ll be able to go to it for an update on my going’ons and happenings, and get the directions for finding the sanctuary. As my friend, I hope that you’ll keep checking up on me. You might have to cut, paste and/or change orientation if you print from the website, be creative until we get the quirks worked out. Again, thank you and I look forward to sharing time with you soon.

In the Light of Christ and through the prayers of Our Lady of Victory,
Love and Peace,

Holly M. Asher
A Friend of Our Lady of Victory
Special Educator, MA
Project Director for **sjbes’**

* I look forward to either seeing you down at **sjbes’ sanctuary**, or here in Moab, Glenwood Springs, Dolores, Navajo Nation, Denver, Ft. Collins, Mammoth Lakes (CA), or to be politically correct someplace on the Colorado Plateau, Western Slope, Front Range, Four Corners, the Southwest, the West, and/or Northwest US – playing, studying, meditating, singing/dancing, praying and working for the Glory of God as I pursue my heart’s desire...My Lord, Our God.

* This letter was updated with minor corrections on 06-29-17 for posting on **sjbes’** new website (www.sjbes.org)