



American Painted Lady butterfly.

Monastic Community Life: Today & Tomorrow

- *brother Mark*

RECENTLY, IN A MEETING WITH A GROUP OF GUESTS WHO have been visiting the Priory annually for several years, various reflections and questions stimulated me to bring together some thoughts that we as a community have been reflecting on for some time. I'd like to share some of that reflection here: As I sat with the group of ten men who were staying at our House of Sabbath guest house one of the group said "brother we've been coming for retreat together for about twelve years and everything seems the same, although of course we notice the aging of the brothers; are you 'worried' about not receiving new and younger members into the monastic community?"

Indeed, at the level of substance and fidelity to the discipline and rhythm of monastic life, there is a 'deepened sameness', and yet the expression of our commitment is constantly evolving as we try to embrace the new moment of each season of life, integrating the awakened hopes and gifts of each brother as well as the developing special needs of some of our brothers.

Worried, No! Concerned, Yes! The Benedictine monastic life as we are living it here at Weston is a wholesome, balanced, growthful and gifting alternative way of living out the values of the Gospel of Jesus. Our privilege and responsibility is to live our values faithfully. The concern is simply that we believe this way of living is a gift that will be of great benefit to future generations and we hope that we will not fail to leave this life as an inheritance for future seekers to build upon. We trust that the work of God, yesterday and today, will flourish tomorrow! ■