

Brother Simon Takes a Vow

By Tom Jolly ©2018

Brother Simon and Brother John were visiting a school for the deaf, and Brother Simon was so moved by the efforts there, that he took a vow of silence for a month to honor the school.

“That’s a very noble thing to do,” Brother John told him.

Brother Simon said, “—,” nodding.

That night, in the common room where the initiates slept on cots, Brother Simon woke up suddenly as Brother John shook him. Keeping to his vows, he didn’t shout out, but just looked at Brother John inquiringly.

Brother John said, “You were talking in your sleep, Brother Simon. Your vow is broken.”

Brother Simon was heartbroken, and the next day, decided to pursue some other noble effort. They visited a school for the crippled, and Brother Simon decided to take a vow to avoid walking for a month, restricting himself to using the Monastery’s one wheel chair when he needed to get around.

But that night, Brother John was shaking him again, and when he woke up, he found himself standing in the middle of the common room amongst the other monks asleep on their cots. “What? Why am I here?” Brother Simon asked.

Brother John said, “You were sleepwalking, pacing up and down the center of the room. Once again, your vow is broken.”

Brother Simon was distraught that God would test him so, but didn’t want to give up. The next day, they visited a clinic that dealt with infertility issues. Brother John was standing next to him when Brother Simon got a look in his eye, and Brother John turned to him and said, “Whatever you are thinking, don’t you dare take a vow of celibacy.”