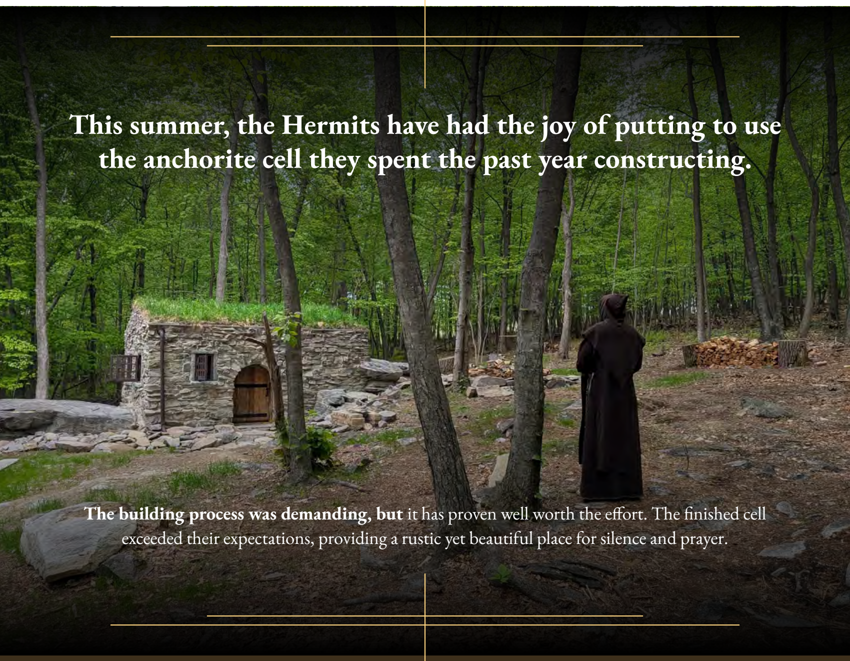
THE DISCALCED HERMITS OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

# *One Stone at a Time*

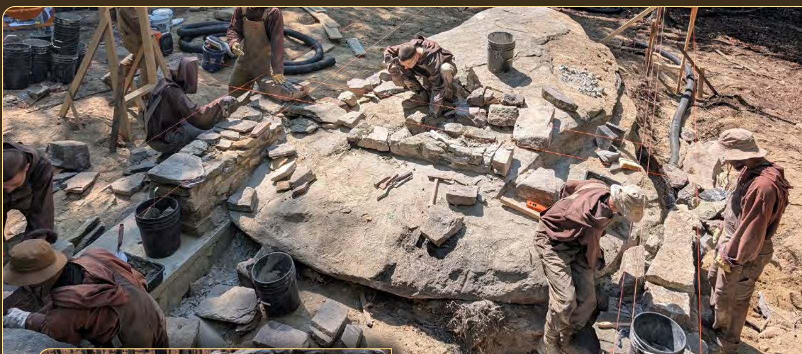


### This summer, the Hermits have had the joy of putting to use the anchorite cell they spent the past year constructing.

**The building process was demanding, but** it has proven well worth the effort. The finished cell exceeded their expectations, providing a rustic yet beautiful place for silence and prayer.

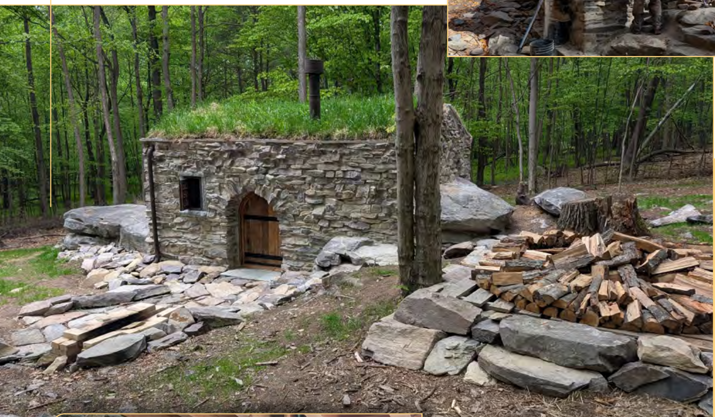
## The project was a group effort, ...

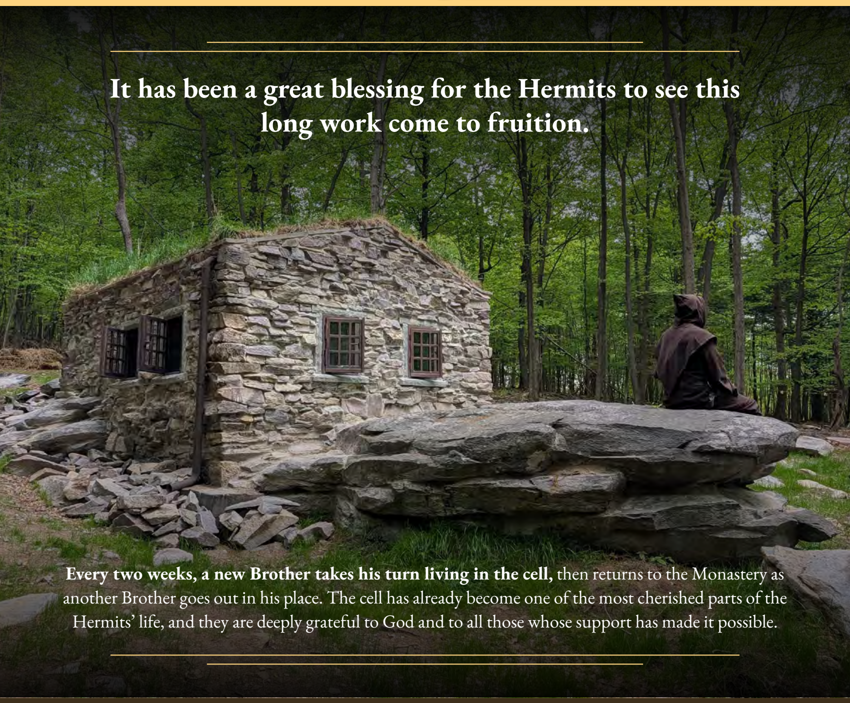
... with over a dozen of the Hermits involved. Many long hours went into research, planning, design, and, finally, building.



## Over the course of many months, ...

... what began as a small clearing nestled between two massive boulders became a simple dwelling, tucked away in the woods and built for a life hidden with Christ.





## It has been a great blessing for the Hermits to see this long work come to fruition.

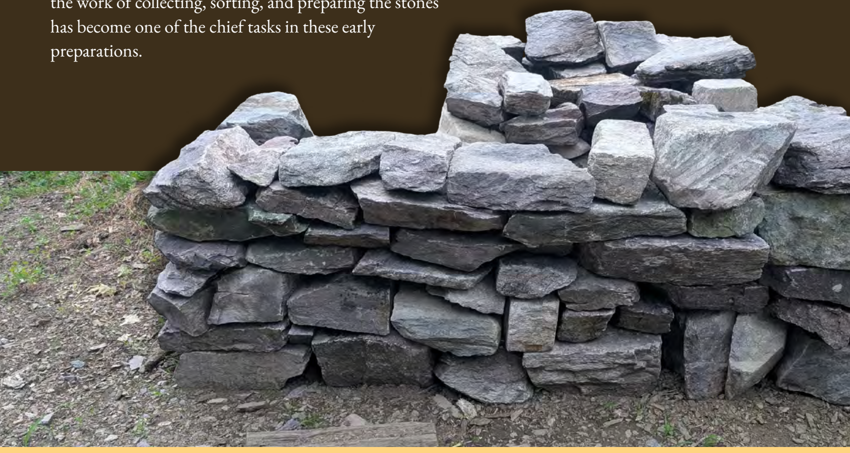
**Every two weeks, a new Brother takes his turn living in the cell,** then returns to the Monastery as another Brother goes out in his place. The cell has already become one of the most cherished parts of the Hermits' life, and they are deeply grateful to God and to all those whose support has made it possible.

## With this first cell now in use, ...

**... the Hermits have turned their attention to the next one.** They have chosen a site, settled on a design, and begun assembling the necessary materials.

## Like the first cell, this one will be built of hand-stacked stone.

**It will be larger, however, and will include a small chapel** where a Hermit priest will be able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This larger design has kept the Hermits busy. Since this cell will require nearly twice as many stone as the first, the work of collecting, sorting, and preparing the stones has become one of the chief tasks in these early preparations.



## Although gathering stones may sound simple, ...

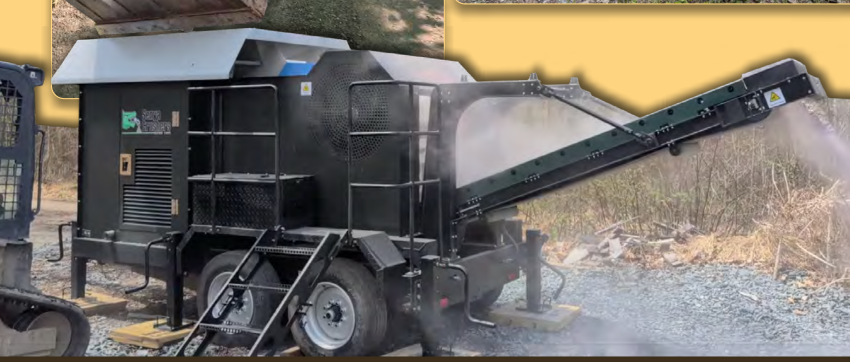
... the Hermits learned a lot from their efforts last year, and have come up with **a more organized process.** Brothers go out into the hills and forests of the property, focusing on areas with high concentrations of stone. **After a large pile has been gathered,** the stones are carefully sorted on the side of the road. **The larger and more rectangular pieces are stacked together for building,** while the unsuitable stones are set aside.

**The Hermits hope that sorting the stones ahead of time in this way will make the building process quicker and more efficient, ...**

... since, when building by hand, a great deal of time is spent searching for well-shaped stones. Sorting the stones beforehand will also help the Hermits know when they have gathered enough to begin construction, saving them the inconvenience of having to pause the work later in order to gather more.

**Even though many of the stones collected are not suitable for building, ...**

... they will still be put to good use. **With the help of an industrial rock crusher**, the Hermits are able to **turn their stones into gravel for the many dirt roads** that run throughout their property. This gravel will be a great help in improving access to the future site of the Monastery, especially for the construction vehicles that will need to travel up the steep hillside.



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**Although these preparations are still only the beginning, the Hermits are grateful to see their work on the next anchorite cell moving forward.**

**Each stone gathered brings the cell closer to completion.** Their simple work calls to mind the Little Way of St. Thérèse, who wrote: “Little things done out of love are those that charm the Heart of Christ… On the contrary, the most brilliant deeds, when done without love, are but nothingness. ” To pick up a stone is not, in itself, a great deed. But when it is done for the love of God, even such a small task becomes precious in His eyes and a hidden source of grace for the whole Church. **In this spirit, the Hermits continue their humble labors, slowly and patiently, one stone at a time.**

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