

Play Gregorian Chant while Monks process into a straight line in front of group

Monks going away one by one- music gets Softer and Softer

When music stops....

N: There was a famous monastery that had fallen on hard times. In its past, the many buildings were filled with young monks and its big church resounded with chants every day. Now, the pews of the church were empty and silent with the exception of just a handful of monks who praised God with heavy hearts.

N: On the edge of the monastery was a dark forest. On the edge of that forest, a rabbi had built a simple hut. Away from his temple and synagogue, the rabbi often visited the monastery to worship.

Monk one (Patrick): Rabbi Abraham is here!

N: The rabbi's routine was always the same. He would make his way through the grounds and into the church. Kneel before the altar....

Rabbi (Pablo): elohim adonai

N: and finish with a firm...

Rabbi (Pablo): Amen

N: While none of the monks ever conversed with Rabbi Maury and often quietly debated the question of why a rabbi would choose to worship in a Christian monastery, they nonetheless felt sustained by his prayerful presence.

N: One day the leader of the Monastery, Brother Jeff, decided to settle this mystery for good. He made his way, Bible in hand, to the edge of the Dark Forest and to the humble Rabbi's quaint hut.

(Brother Jarrod knocks on the door. Rabbi answers with a copy of the Torah in hand. Rabbi and Brother stare in silence for five seconds...)

Rabbi (Pablo): Brother Michael, welcome.

(Rabbi opens arms in welcome and brother enters and hugs the Rabbi. They make their way to the table and sit each with their bible squarely in front of them.).

N: For a little while, the two men of God talked. They talked of their youth, their roots and their chosen paths in life. Inevitably, the talked turned to the failing monastery.

Abbot (Jarrod): Rabbi, I must ask. Why do you come to our humble monastery? Our walls are poor, our numbers few, and our chants are soft.

Rabbi (Pablo): Brother, I go to your monastery for two reasons. I go to your monastery because you and your brothers are serving God. In that service, I find comfort and peace. But you serve God with heavy hearts.

To give the second reason for my vigil at the monastery, let me give you a teaching that you can share with your brothers.

Abbot (Jarrod): Please,

Rabbi (Pablo): Brother, I go to your monastery because the Messiah is among you.

N: The brother sat in silence for several minutes unsure of the lesson and its meaning. Finally the brother and the rabbi parted ways. The abbot rushed back to his fellow brothers and relayed the teaching. They all gathered around him.

Abbot (Jarrod): I received a teaching from the rabbi. This teaching must never again be spoken **(as he singles out each monk)**. The Rabbi has said that one of us is the Messiah!

N: The monks stood shell shocked.

Monk 1 (Patrick): What does that mean? The son of God, here, in this monastery?

Monk 2 (Alonzo): Is it Brother Jason?

Monk 3 (Panda): No, it must be Brother Joshua, he prays the longest devotions everyday.

Monk 1 (Patrick): Maybe its me...maybe God will come to me in a dream or as burning bush and tell me that I am his son.

Monk 2 (Alonzo): How could it be you, I saw you text messaging Brother Mel during morning prayer. Hardly the act of a messiah wanna be.

Monk 3 (Panda): The messiah, here! What does this mean?

N: They were all deeply puzzled by the rabbi's teaching. But no one ever mentioned it again. As time went by, the monks began to treat one another with a very special reverence. There was a gentle, wholehearted, human quality about them now which was hard to describe but easy to notice. They loved with one another as men who had finally found something. Occasional visitors found themselves deeply moved by the life of these monks. Before long, people were coming from far and wide to be nourished by the prayer life of the monks and young men were asking once again, to become part of the community.

Eddie: As we begin this retreat remember the Rabbi's message...

Rabbi (Pablo): **(Addressing the crowd)** The Messiah is among you!

Eddie: We have come together this day to get away from all of our daily clutter to make time for God in our life. Today, we search for the meaning of the Rabbi's message...a message the members of the monastery failed to grasp. We will search for the answer in ourselves, in others, in prayers, in scripture, in nature, in silence, and in the Eucharist.

Let us ask God to open our eyes, our ears, our minds, and hearts so that we can learn the lesson of the Rabbi's teaching.

Let us pray: O Lord, we search for you. The search has been long. The search has been difficult. Help us today to listen to the sound of your unhurrying feet seeking us out in all the crossroads of our conversations, our busy days, and the empty silence of our lives. Help us to be at rest in you.

Saint....

Live.....

Amen