

## **The Silence of Rest**

By Patricia Hendricks, Executive Director

The theme of this season's *The Active Contemplative*, is "I will give you rest." I Find rest in silence. I always have. I particularly use silence when life is difficult for me to manage. This past June my father passed away after a long Battle with cancer. I watched a vibrant man, my personal hero, deteriorate as the cancer consumed his body. He died peacefully, and that was some consolation, but not enough.

After his death, I spent time at my favorite place of rest and quiet, ARC retreat center in Cambridge, MN. On the desk in my room was a poem by Frances Tabor, "Come Apart and Rest Awhile." One verse stood out for me, "There is no way other than to take our messes into the darkness of silence." I sat with that verse for three days. I looked out the window, took long walks, slept, cried, and listened to the stillness---to nothingness, and I felt the quiet minister to my grieving soul.

I knew when I left that place and went home the grief would still be with me, but I had found a companion for that grieving process, silence. As the months passed, I found other companions---my spiritual director, my sister, husband, a friend, and a grief group. And those people were helpful, but it was the hours I spent hearing nothing that prepared my soul for the healing it needed. There **is** rest in the quiet---a rest that can calm the worried, and bring peace to the wounded.