

When you buy something from an artist
 you're buying more than an object.
 You're buying hundreds of hours
 of errors and experimentation.
 You're buying years of frustration
 and moments of pure joy.
 You're not buying just one thing,
 you are buying a piece of a heart,



a piece of a soul...
 a small piece of someone else's life.

Rebekah Joy Plett

Carmelite Monastery

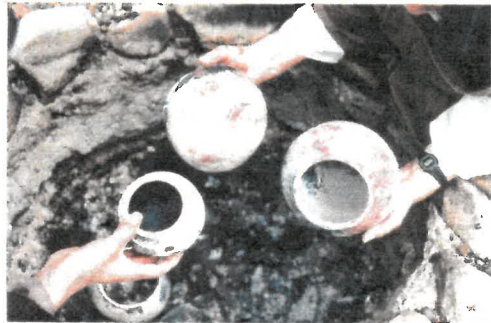
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*Carmelite Nuns
 and
 Studio Potters*



Carmel-by-the-Sea



California

"The Creative Process"

Creativity is first of all a way of life, an attitude of mind and heart. The way we set the table, arrange flowers or sweep the floor can be done with creativity and beauty. If we live in the beautiful Presence of God and are beautiful in our very being, everything we do will be



beautiful. God is Beauty, and are we not made in God's image and likeness?

Several of us have been doing pottery for about

twenty years. We had some initial lessons in hand building and wheel throwing but we are pretty much self-taught potters. We have created our own style of glazing over the years. Our pottery is inspired by our prayer life and is an expression of God's work in us. As we work the soft clay, we allow the shape and form to reveal itself. In a similar way, if our hearts are soft and flexible God can form and shape us into His image and likeness. Each piece is a story of transformation from a lump of clay to a piece of art. The potter is also transformed in this creative process.

"The Technical Process"



This is Wet Clay.

We use stoneware and porcelain clay. The preparation of the clay is important and hard work. The wedging process (shown at left) removes lumps and air bubbles and makes the clay pliable, soft and smooth.



This is Greenware.

It is bone-dry stoneware clay and then bisqued at a low temperature. It is still fragile and ready to be glazed.

This is Glazed.

It has been stained and then sprayed with glaze. Next more stain was applied. It is now ready for the kiln firing.



This is Finished.

This was fired to cone 10 (2831° F) in an electric kiln for 8 hours. Allowed to cool for 8 hours. Opening the kiln to see the finished ceramics is exciting.

"The Spiritual Process"

In the contemplative lifestyle an essential atmosphere of silence, recollection and solitude is necessary to live in the prayerful presence of God. The quiet centering needed for creative activities are part of monastic life and contribute to this ideal.

There is so much to ponder even in wet, cold, gray clay. The transformation that cold clay goes through



during the wedging, shaping, trimming, glazing and firing is truly an amazing process to contemplate! It is parallel with the purification

that happens as God wedges out our imperfections by the sorrows and challenges of life. God, the Potter of Isaiah, shapes and forms our softened hearts and transforms us into His own image and likeness. The process is sometimes uncomfortable. As you create or appreciate beautiful things you are being transformed into someone beautiful for God and by God.