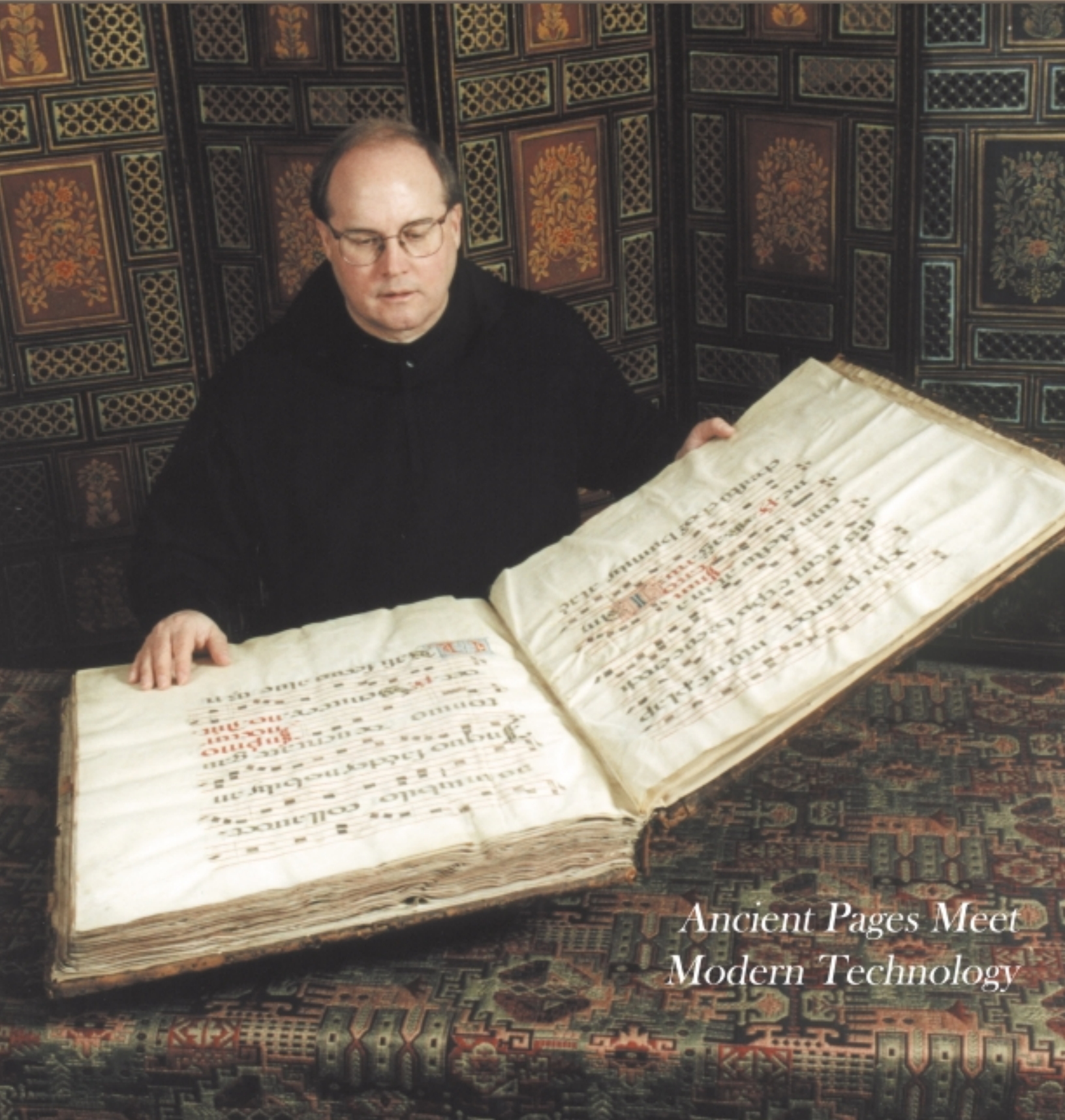


Volume 2 • Issue 1 • Spring 2002



THE ABBEY BANNER

Magazine of Saint John's Abbey



*Ancient Pages Meet
Modern Technology*



The Abbey Banner

Magazine of Saint John's Abbey
Volume 2, Issue 1
Spring 2002

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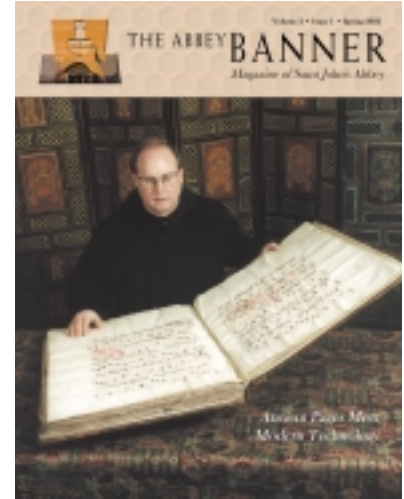
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A Memorable Monastic Easter

by Daniel Durken, OSB

My most memorable Easter happened fifty-one years ago, in 1951. That was the year the abbey received permission from Rome to celebrate the restored and newly revised Easter Vigil.



Previously the monastic community had gathered in the early morning of Holy Saturday to sing out the season of Lent that ended at noon that day. But the singing was out of sync with the time. The *Exultet*, that superb serenade to the Easter Candle in praise of the risen Christ, kept referring to “the night.” Almost a dozen times that word was repeated. For instance:

*“This is the night when first you . . .
freed the people of Israel from slavery.
This is the night when Christians everywhere . . .
are restored to grace.
This is the night when Jesus Christ . . .
rose triumphant from the grave.
The power of this holy night . . .
casts out hatred, brings us peace.”*

All the while, the rising sun was streaming through the east windows of the church! It was painfully obvious that this was not night. It was morning! As plain as day!

This exercise in incongruity was dramatically and emphatically changed in 1955. Thanks to the creative efforts of my beloved confrere Godfrey Diekmann, OSB, the new rite was then introduced.

The celebration *was at night!* The church was dark. Then one candle, the Easter candle, was lit. And from that flame the candles of the congregation were lit. A glow of glory spread through the church. It took my breath away.

As simple as that, I knew once and for all what Easter is all about. Easter is about light in the night, about day overcoming darkness, about the power of love to undo hate, about the victory of life over death.

Easter is about the risen Jesus who tells us, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Easter is about all of us of whom Jesus dares to say, “YOU are the light of the world!” (Matthew 5:14) +

To Believe in Easter . . .

by Abbot John Klassen, OSB



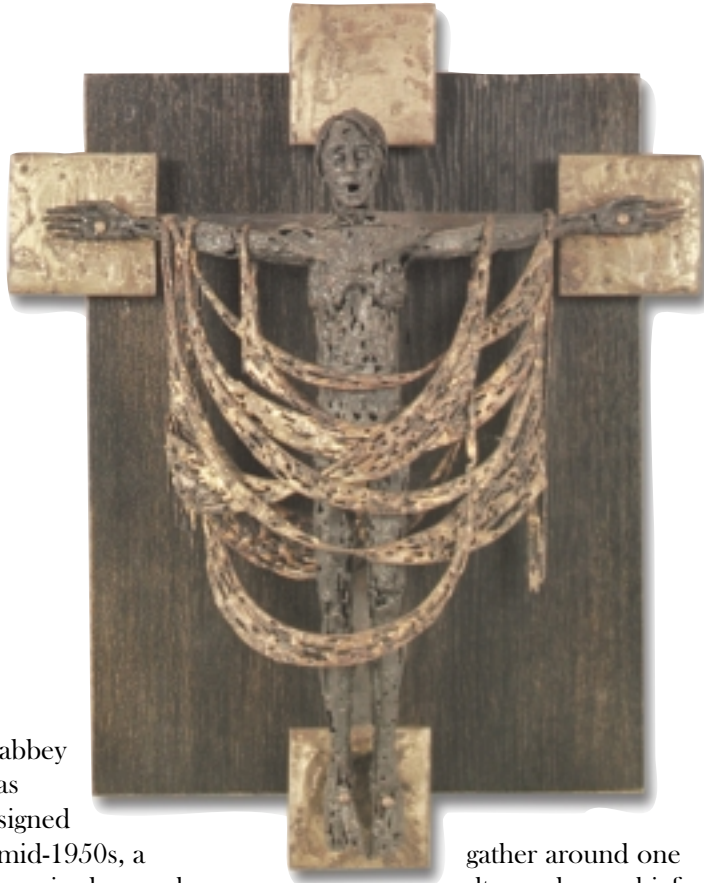
To believe in Easter, we need to believe in death. We need to know that death is real.

Our culture consistently denies the process of aging, loss and finally death. Some, like my mom, go gentle into the night. Others go slowly, through cancer, Alzheimer’s or heart disease. We have to know that Christ really died. Before we look at Easter flowers, Easter sunshine, Easter crosses, we have to know that Easter faith begins with death.

To believe in Easter, we must believe in conversion and transformation. Jesus proclaims the reign of God and the need for conversion. Those who followed him wanted to change: Peter, Mary Magdalene, the woman at the well, the Beloved Disciple. Jesus, however, transforms the meaning of this ministry by his self-gift on the cross and his unimaginable resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus is evidence that self-giving love is possible, that love is the most powerful force for change in the world. Before we look at Easter flowers, Easter sunshine, Easter crosses, we have to know that Easter faith begins with conversion.

To believe in Easter, we must believe in life. Not life as an abstraction—but my life and your life, the life of confreres, spouses, friends and enemies. We stand with God at the beginning of creation and behold life with the wonder that God felt. We say with God, “It is very good.” Every stage of life has its work, its possibilities for growth, for caring and letting go, for failing and forgiving, for reconciliation and peace. Anyone who has lived needs Easter. Before we look at Easter flowers, Easter sunshine, Easter crosses, we need to know that Easter faith begins with life.

To believe in Easter, we must believe in Jesus Christ. The Risen Lord calls us by name. He who has the words of eternal life walks on the road with us and teaches us the meaning of all that happened. Jesus Christ gives us the great commission to feed, heal, forgive, love and baptize. Only our Risen Lord can speak these words with authority. Before we look at Easter flowers, Easter sunshine, Easter crosses, we need to know that Easter faith begins with Jesus Christ, the Risen One. +



This crucifix by deceased Collegeville resident Joseph O’Connell depicts Christ breaking the bonds of death by shredding his shroud that now hangs in loose ribbons from his arms. Rather than to a cross, Christ is affixed to four rectangles arranged in four directions pointing to his universal triumph over death.

photos by Andra Van Kempen

The Crucifixes of Collegeville

by Daniel Durken, OSB

As the new abbey church was being designed in the mid-1950s, a serious issue was raised, namely, how to provide for the daily celebration of Mass by the more than two hundred priests of the monastic community.

For some time liturgical reformers had been urging the restoration of the rite of concelebration. Many

priests would

gather around one altar and one chief celebrant at one time to celebrate the Eucharist. The need for many altars would thereby be alleviated.

When authorities in Rome were asked if concelebration were a proximate possibility, the answer was an emphatic “NO!” So the church building committee informed architect Marcel Breuer that he would have to provide individual chapels in the lower level of the new church for the daily celebration of private Masses.

Breuer designed thirty-four chapels, each with a uniquely crafted granite altar, each dedicated to a specific saint, each having a differently designed crucifix. But in 1963, two years after the completion of the new church, the Second Vatican Council promulgated its

Saint John’s most unusual crucifix is the one dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi.

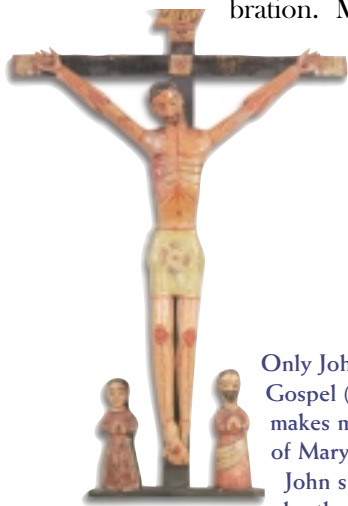
Artist Gerald Bonnette, SJU ’53, was inspired by the story of Francis’ vision of the winged seraph revealing Christ to him. Isaiah had the original vision of seraphim (angels) with their six wings and their cry of “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts” (6:2-3).

The eyes in the wings signify God’s all-seeing power.

monumental *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. One of its directives states, “It has seemed good to the Council to extend permission for concelebration whereby the unity of the priesthood is appropriately manifested.” Since then the weekday monastic Mass has been concelebrated.

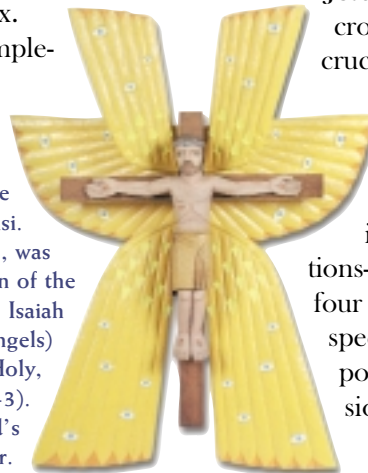
Except for a dozen chapels still in use by priests who prefer to offer private Masses, today these separate sanctuaries have become museum pieces, hidden from public view behind locked doors. Yet these chapels silently teach an essential lesson.

The crucifixes of these Collegeville chapels are a creative and concrete testimony to the scriptural complexity of Jesus’ death on the cross. Just as each crucifix has its own special, unique features—as the reader will notice in the accompanying photos and captions—so too each of the four Gospels gives us a special, unique faith portrait of Jesus’ passion and death.

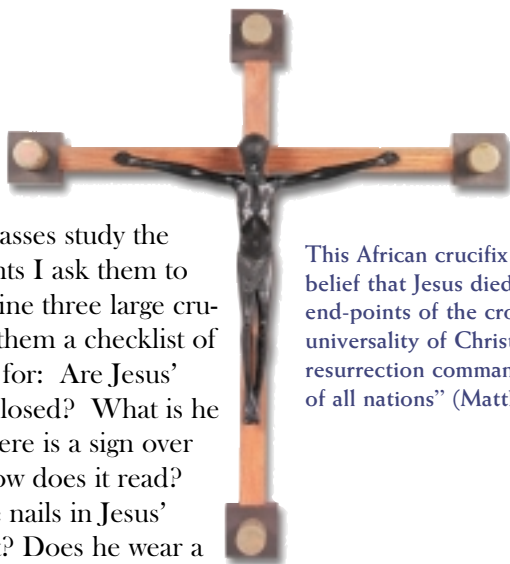


Only John’s Gospel (19:26) makes mention of Mary and John standing by the cross as

shown in this crucifix scene, a carving from New Mexico. The bloody figure of Jesus is prominent in Spanish art. Jesus’ mother and the beloved disciple look not at the crucifix but forward as tiny models of Christian devotion.



Before the students in my theology classes study the passion accounts I ask them to carefully examine three large crucifixes. I give them a checklist of details to look for: Are Jesus' eyes open or closed? What is he wearing? If there is a sign over Jesus' head, how does it read? Where are the nails in Jesus' hands and feet? Does he wear a crown of thorns? Is his side pierced?

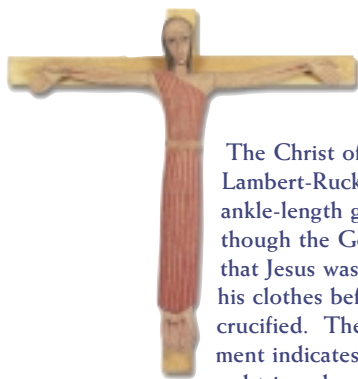


This African crucifix emphasizes our belief that Jesus died for all people. The end-points of the cross also signify the universality of Christ's sacrifice and his resurrection command to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

The students return convinced that when they have seen one crucifix they have *not* seen them all. Now it is an easy matter to likewise demonstrate that when they have read one Gospel they have not read them all. Each Gospel writer is as much an artist, carefully crafting his faith portrait of the dying/dead Jesus, as is the artist who made a crucifix.

The careful reader of the Passion Narratives quickly discovers the differences and discrepancies in each evangelist's story. For example:

The last words the dying Jesus speaks from the cross are similar in Mark and Matthew but completely new and different in Luke and John.



The Christ of Jean Lambert-Rucki wears an ankle-length garment even though the Gospels imply that Jesus was stripped of his clothes before he was crucified. The long garment indicates the dignity and triumph over death of

Jesus who is now clothed in eternal glory.

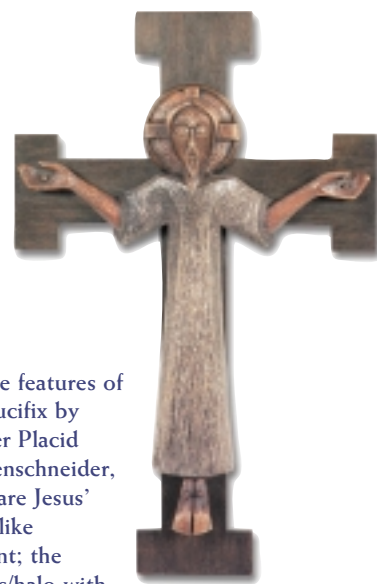
The written charge against Jesus placed over his head is slightly different in each Gospel. Only John, moreover, mentions that the inscription is written in Hebrew (the language of the Jewish scriptures), Latin (the language of the Roman conqueror) and Greek (the language of the Christian scriptures).

Luke makes no mention of Jesus' crown of thorns and he is the only one who gives us the poignant story of the good criminal who asks, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

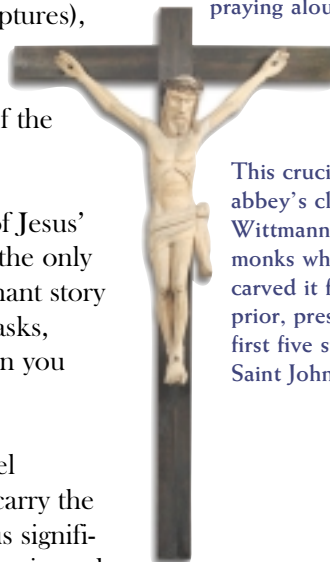
The differences in the Gospel accounts and in the crucifixes carry the theological lessons, the religious significance that the authors and artists intend to convey in the masterpieces they have produced.

Even though Lent and Holy Week are over and the Easter Season is upon us, it is never too late to carefully and prayerfully read and pray the Bible's Way of the Cross and artists' Crosses of the Way. +

Mary Schaffer, curator of Arca Artium, and Alan Reed, OSB, curator of art and artifacts of Saint John's Abbey and University, contributed to the photo captions.



Unique features of the crucifix by Brother Placid Stuckenschneider, OSB, are Jesus' monk-like garment; the nimbus/halo with the cross at Jesus' head to signify the aura of glory; and the posture of Jesus' outstretched arms and open hands in the traditional gesture of openness to receive God's gifts. This is the same gesture a priest adopts when praying aloud at Mass.



This crucifix hangs at the entrance to the abbey's cloister. Young Cornelius Wittmann, OSB, one of the five pioneer monks who founded Saint John's in 1856, carved it from basswood. He served as prior, president and sole professor for the first five students of the newly opened Saint John's Seminary.



This twelfth-century Spanish processional crucifix surrounds Jesus with traditional symbols of the Gospel writers: lion=Mark, ox=Matthew, human being=Luke, eagle=John. The symbols appear in Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:7 and may have originated from Babylonian signs of the zodiac to respectively represent fire, earth, water and air, the four elements of the universe. Jesus, Son of God, rules over them all.



Father Eric with the Fesler manuscript, a fifteenth-century manuscript from Iberia

photos by Andra Van Kempen

The Hill Monastic Manuscript Library: Ancient Pages Meet Modern Technology

by Margaret Wethington Arnold

In the corner of his office next to his computer, Eric Hollas, OSB, executive director of the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library (HMML), has a late seventeenth-century Italian prie-dieu (kneeler for praying) with a fourteenth-century manuscript on top.

“They were given to the library three years ago by the descendants of Gertrude Hill Gavin, youngest daughter of railroad magnate James J. Hill,” explains Father Eric. “The same member of the Hill family, after whom the library is named, also gave us two late medieval books that belonged to Gertrude.”

Having art objects from the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries juxtaposed with a twenty-first century computer may be the best way to symbolize the work of HMML since Eric became its director in 1993. “We represent the second generation of this library,” he said. “The first generation built this vast collection. We provide services and access for scholars

and the general public to an electronic bibliographical inventory of our manuscripts, something the previous generation could not do.”

The presentation of HMML’s collection in electronic format on the web (www.hmml.org) may be the most important accomplishment for Eric who is stepping down after nine years as director. “The computer has brought us into much greater contact with scholars around the world,” he noted.

Reflecting on other accomplishments, Eric refers to the establishment of the Heckman Scholar Awards. Named after A. A. Heckman, former chair of HMML’s Board of Overseers, the awards are study and travel grants to young scholars to conduct research at HMML for their doctoral dissertations. “This allows us to connect with young scholars throughout North America. For the first time the library has its own alumni/ae in a sense,” Eric said. “Our hope is

that research for their current project will whet their interest for future projects here and that they will send us their own students.”

Since HMML was founded in 1965 it has assembled nearly 90,000 manuscripts on microfilm out of the more than one million manuscripts extant in Europe and uncounted numbers elsewhere. Of those manuscripts in Europe, perhaps half are adequately protected in well-maintained and accessible collections. Significant numbers elsewhere are endangered or inaccessible to scholars. HMML launched its aggressive program of filming manuscripts in Austria and has also filmed in Germany, Spain, Portugal, Ethiopia and England. The library's most recent work is underway in Sweden, Germany and Malta.

Saint John's Benedictine ties with a significant number of European monasteries having manuscript libraries helped to initiate filming projects. Those connections allayed the fears of foreign libraries that their treasures might not be respected and protected in the United States. A common commitment to the book arts transcended national concerns.

Looking to the future, Eric remarked, “Our hope is to focus some of our work on eastern and northern Europe, from the Balkans to the Baltic. There is tremendous need there as well as great danger for the future of manuscripts. This is part of our strategic plan.”

Indeed, HMML's four-year strategic plan was not even in place for a year before Eric received word that HMML has permission to film manuscripts anywhere in Armenia. “Twelve years ago we could not have gone into Armenia because it was a Communist country,” Eric explained.

In addition to preservation and study, HMML focuses on outreach and teaching about the cultures that produce the manuscript. The library offers exhibits, curriculum resources, a web site and

publications to provide general education on the book arts for the many diverse groups that visit the library annually.

HMML is one way Saint John's exercises its role as a university, according to Eric. “This is what a university should be doing—advancing knowledge and international scholarship. Saint John's has done something that no other university in the

country has done with this magnitude of manuscripts preserved and the promotion of manuscript studies.

“Saint John's is also living out its commitment to reverence for the book and the book arts. This is part of our Benedictine heritage. Out of that grew our vision of preserving manuscripts for future generations.”

It was through this commitment to the book arts and a relationship between Saint John's and Donald Jackson, artistic director of *The Saint John's Bible*, that Saint John's commissioned the Bible illumination project. Eric explained, “Donald and I were making a joint presentation to The Newberry Library in Chicago when Donald first proposed the idea of doing a handwritten, illuminated Bible. I brought the idea back and that began the discussions and eventually the commitment to the idea.”

The Bible project has also provided Eric with some memorable moments in the last five years as a frequent spokesperson for the project, including



Ethiopian Psalter. Seventeenth century.

The Library maintains several study centers for its special microfilm collections. One such center represents the Ethiopian collection. Over 7,500 Ethiopian Orthodox Christian manuscripts are preserved on microfilm at HMML. Ethiopian monks have continued the practice of handwriting and recopying ancient texts to the present day. These manuscripts are of particular interest to modern biblical scholars because a number of them preserve religious texts that were destroyed or lost in the medieval West. This seventeenth-century psalter was written on parchment in the ancient Ge'ez language and script still used in the Ethiopian Church. From the Franklin H. Williams collection

an appearance on *ABC Evening News* with Peter Jennings and an interview for a cover story in *Smithsonian* magazine. “Those are the kinds of things that we never expect to do as a monk. There is no training in the novitiate that prepares us for this,” Eric noted. “It is a wonderful opportunity to project the idea that the Benedictine tradition of Saint John's is alive and will continue to live for generations to come.”

After a yearlong sabbatical, Eric looks forward to returning to Saint John's and working on arts and cultural affairs projects. He reflected, “A theme of my life as a librarian at Saint John's was getting to know a wide variety of people and introducing them to Saint John's. It has been very gratifying to me as a monk to project the life of Saint John's.” +



Father Magnus surrounded by polyhedra. In the last four decades he has made several hundred polyhedra—a “perfect balance of mathematics and art.”

photos by Andra Van Kempen

A Padre’s Passion for Polyhedra

by Wilfred Theisen, OSB

Medieval manuscripts often portrayed God as the Great Geometer who employed geometry when creating the world. For example, as the accompanying thirteenth-century illustration shows, God chose to make the world as a perfect sphere rather than some other figure such as a cylinder, a cube or an ellipsoid.

According to this tradition God positioned the planets in orbits calculated from the relative sizes of Plato's five regular solids: the tetrahedron (four-sided), the cube (six-sided), the octahedron (eight-sided), the dodecahedron (twelve-sided) and the icosahedron (twenty-sided). Indeed, these solids were considered perfect solids because all of their sides and angles are equal.

In his *Timaeus*, Plato asserts that the Creator used

these polyhedra as the fundamental shapes for fire, air, earth, water and ether. Out of these the entire universe was composed. There are, therefore, religious roots for the study of Platonic polyhedra.

Plato’s Academy was closed by the Emperor Justinian in 529 A.D.—the very same year that St. Benedict founded Monte Cassino as a “school of the Lord’s service” (Prolog, *Rule of St. Benedict*). Consequently, who is better suited to carry on the tradition of working with Plato’s solids than a Benedictine monk?

At Saint John’s the monk who has taken on this task is Magnus Wenninger, OSB. For the past four decades, working with polyhedra can be described as his passion, perhaps even his addiction. Father Magnus, 82, spends most of his time in his monastic cell working on polyhedra unless he is attending a community function or taking a parish assignment on weekends. My interview with him follows.

WT: When did you first decide to explore the world of polyhedra?



This illustration from a thirteenth-century manuscript depicts God as Creator-Geometer, making the world as a perfect sphere.

MW: After I was ordained a priest on September 2, 1945, Abbot Alcuin Deutsch called me to say that Saint John's was starting a school in Nassau, Bahamas, and he wanted me to go there and teach. "What will I teach?" I asked. "They'll tell you when you get there," was all the information the abbot gave me.

Before I went to the Bahamas I was assigned to study at the University of Ottawa in Canada to get a Master's degree in educational psychology. I found that almost all of the courses were being taught in French, a language I had never learned.

Fortunately there was a teacher there, Thomas Greenwood, who was willing to give me a course in symbolic logic, closely related to mathematical logic. I received a Master's degree in philosophy in 1946 with a dissertation on "The Concept of Number."

At Saint Augustine's College in the Bahamas I was given a choice of teaching English or mathematics. I chose the latter since it was closer to what I had studied in Canada. After ten years of teaching mathematics I went to Columbia University to study the "new math," a program that led to a Master's degree in mathematics education.

At Columbia I found the models of polyhedra so attractive that I started reading about them. I began making my own models and eventually I made all fifty-nine icosahedra and many of the uniform polyhedra. They lined the shelves at the back of my classroom.

WT: When did you publish your first work on polyhedra?

MW: In 1966 I wrote a forty-page booklet on polyhedra for the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. After that publication I wrote to Professor Coxter, a renowned writer on polyhedra, who sent me a copy of one of his publications. That was the first time I saw the full list of seventy-five polyhedra.

I started making the models using card-stock paper (tag board) and displayed them in my classroom.

WT: Your initial success spurred you to go further?

MW: Yes. I contacted Cambridge University Press and they liked the photographs I sent them of my polyhedra. With help from R. Buckley of Oxford I completed the polyhedra, which was the first time all of the polyhedra had been done in paper.

My book, *Polyhedron Models*, was published in 1971. It was translated into Russian in 1974 and into Japanese in 1979. I kept working on related topics. In 1979 I

published *Spherical Models* and in 1983 *Dual Models*. After seeing the former, Professor Coxter wrote to me and said, "You have outdone Buckminster Fuller!" *Polyhedron Models* and *Dual Models* are still in print by Cambridge University Press, and *Spherical Models* is available as a Dover reprint.

WT: Do you attend international conferences on polyhedra?

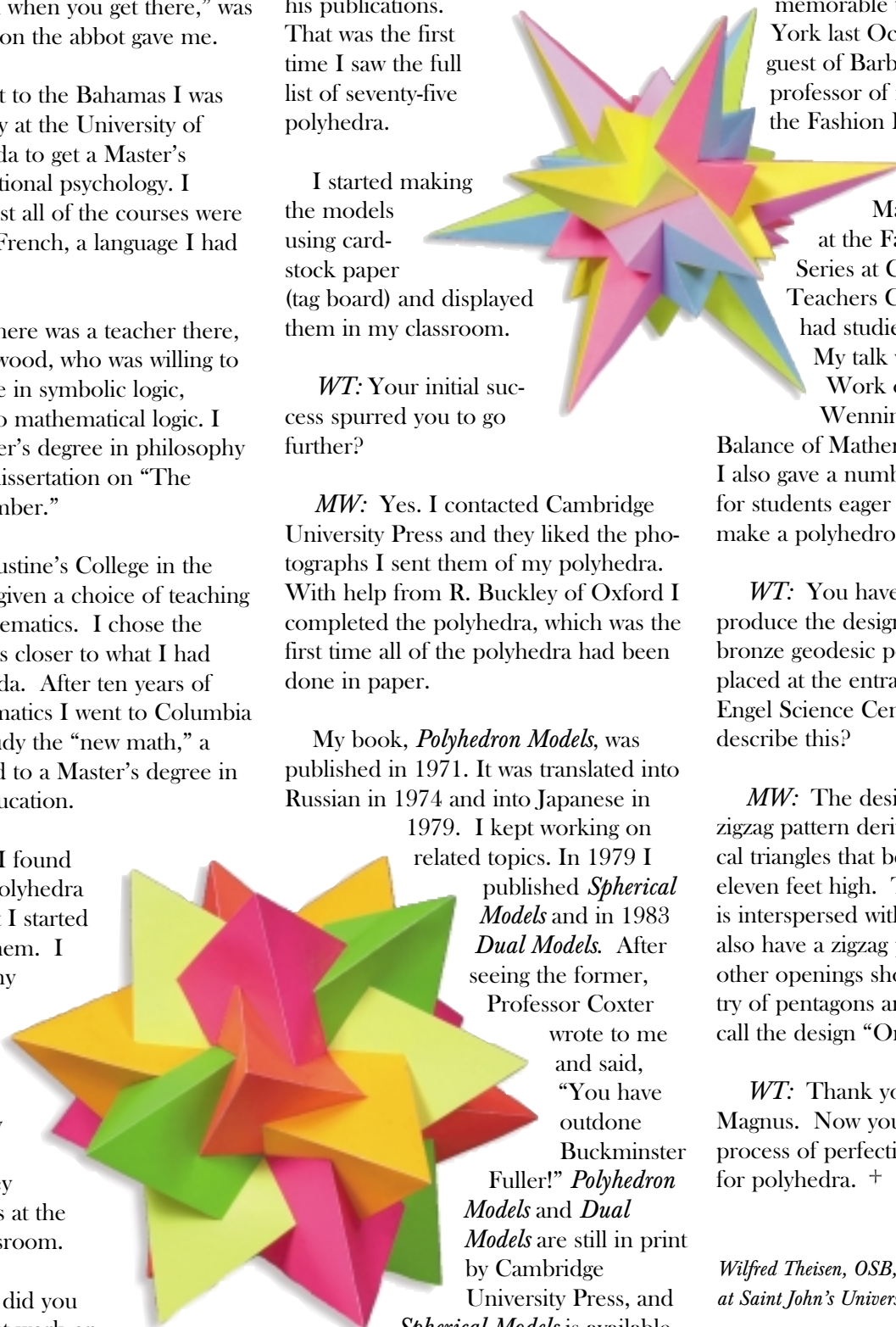
MW: Yes, I have attended conferences in Leningrad and in Stockholm. But one of my most memorable trips was to New York last October. I was the guest of Barbara Anderson, a professor of mathematics at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in Manhattan. I spoke at the Fall Colloquium Series at Columbia Teachers College where I had studied forty years ago. My talk was entitled "The Work of Magnus J. Wenninger: A Perfect Balance of Mathematics and Art." I also gave a number of workshops for students eager to learn how to make a polyhedron.

WT: You have been asked to produce the design for a large bronze geodesic polyhedron to be placed at the entrance of the Peter Engel Science Center. Will you describe this?

MW: The design calls for a zigzag pattern derived from spherical triangles that belong to a sphere eleven feet high. The zigzag pattern is interspersed with openings that also have a zigzag pattern along with other openings showing the symmetry of pentagons and hexagons. I call the design "Order in Chaos."

WT: Thank you, Father Magnus. Now you can return to the process of perfecting your passion for polyhedra. +

Wilfred Theisen, OSB, is professor of physics at Saint John's University.





photos from Holy Name of Jesus Church

A Benedictine Pastor and Parish: Arnold Weber, OSB, at Holy Name Parish, Medina

by James P. Shannon

Since the founding in 1864 of the Catholic parish of the Holy Name of Jesus in Medina, Minnesota, ten of its pastors have been Benedictine priests of Saint John's Abbey. For the last twenty-two years its resident pastor has been Father Arnold Weber, OSB, who stepped down from this post on September 1, 2001, at the age of 76. He has assumed his new role as pastor emeritus with his friend and fellow Benedictine, Jonathan Licari, OSB, Holy Name's new pastor.

In Father Arnold's time as pastor Holy Name has grown from a parish of 350 families to one of 2700 families. One of its lay leaders has been ordained a diocesan priest. Six of its parishioners have been ordained permanent deacons, all of whom are now members of the parish staff. The parish school has doubled in size and enrollment. Four successful capital campaigns have been completed and a fifth one is currently underway. During this period Arnold has been the only priest at Holy Name. Each week he has regularly celebrated all four weekend Masses plus a daily Mass.

Holy Name parish now has a total of seventy employees to cope with the extensive pastoral needs of its large and growing congregation. Fortunately, Arnold has a natural gift for a collegial

style of administration that, in his own words, "leaves me free to spend most of my time in the spiritual formation of the community."

Arnold enrolled at Saint John's Preparatory School in 1940, two years after the death of the legendary Virgil Michel, OSB, the pioneer of the liturgical movement in the United States. Even though he was not a student in Virgil's classes, Arnold is a true believer in Virgil's well-known teaching that the quality of our liturgy and the vitality of our Eucharistic faith are directly demonstrated in our daily practice of social justice towards all other people. Today Holy Name celebrates a vibrant liturgy that includes four separate voice choirs and a hand bell choir. Visitors frequently praise the quality of the liturgy and the music at the church.

Families in the parish also have particular appreciation for Arnold's dedicated ministry to the spiritual formation of the children of the parish. One graphic example of this ministry is the practice of having the children at Sunday Masses present individual gifts of food for the poor at the altar during the offertory.

In a history of the parish published at the start of the new millennium, Arnold wrote: "Of all the areas I am most proud

of at Holy Name one stands out: we have taken the Second Vatican Council seriously, both in liturgy and in our duty towards the needy.” Given the failure of many parishes to explain and to implement fully the decrees of Vatican II, Arnold’s continuing zeal to elucidate and endorse the decrees of that Council makes Holy Name parish a shining model of good pastoral administration and sound Catholic theology.

Pastors have known for a long time that the strongest bonds between them and their parishioners are largely the result of the Sunday homily. At Holy Name parishioners quickly become aware through Arnold’s homilies that he grew up as one of twelve children on the family farm near St. Martin, Minnesota.

Arnold has a fondness for homely anecdotes of farm life that are reminiscent of the simple parables of Jesus. The pedagogical point of such stories, both with Jesus and with Arnold, can often be summarized in two memorable phrases: “Cultivate an attitude of gratitude” and “Don’t be bitter. Be better.”

Arnold also knows the instructional value of occasional humor in the homily with sometimes even a small barb aimed at himself. He likewise knows that preachers who constantly ask for money often find the Sunday collections dwindling. Arnold rarely asks for money from the pulpit. But he frequently and generously praises his congregation for their abiding generosity to the parish and to the needs of the poor.

One such cause is what parishioners have come to call “Arnie’s Door.” This term refers to the steady stream of evicted families who ring the rectory doorbell, usually at night, seeking shelter. Arnold has a well-polished story of his own transformation on the subject of helping the poor.

One night some years ago a mother and her children, who had just been evicted from their home for failure to pay the rent, rang the rectory bell. The woman had already visited several other churches and had been turned down by all of them. Sensing that she might be turned down again, the woman brashly

told Arnold, “Are you going to preach to me or are you going to help me and my children?” Whereupon he replied, “I am going to help you.” He promptly called a nearby motel to arrange rooms for the family for the night. He then told the mother that he would take them the next day to an apartment where he would pay their first month’s rent.

This routine has become known as “Arnie’s Door” and has been generously subsidized by parishioners who place a high premium on the corporal works of mercy.

With two Benedictine priests from Saint John’s Abbey now assigned to Holy Name, we parishioners feel that we are doubly blessed. The *Rule of St. Benedict* thus will continue to be central to our daily lives and prayers. And the warmth of true Benedictine hospitality will continue to welcome new members to the congregation of the Holy Name of Jesus. God is good! †

James Shannon and his wife, Ruth, have been parishioners of Holy Name Parish for the past eighteen years.



Brother Paul-Vincent Niebauer, OSB, Dean of Students, talks with Saint John's Prep students.

photo by Michael Mullin

Better Visibility Means More Students for Saint John's Prep

by Margaret Wethington Arnold

Saint John's Preparatory School is enjoying better visibility, growing enrollment, a new school building and a strong Benedictine tradition, thanks to its sponsoring community, Saint John's Abbey. The monastic community's presence, prayers and pledge of support has allowed the 145-year-old school to transition from a period of declining enrollment in the 1960s-1980s to a flourishing enrollment today that began in the late 1990s.

The last six years have witnessed an eighty-two percent growth in enrollment. This year there are 312 students in grades seven through twelve. According to Michael Mullin, director of development and alumni relations for the school, visible signs and concerted efforts demonstrate the school's revival. "It may be a cause and effect thing. But certainly it has all come together."

First and foremost, completion of the Weber Center, a multi-purpose facility, provided a visible sign of the school's health and commitment to the future. "You are not going to build a \$1.5 million facility and say, 'Maybe in a couple of years we will close,'" Michael said.

Adding the middle school not only provided more students but also guaranteed enrollment in the upper school. Parents asked school officials to add a middle school so they could send their children to Saint John's in the seventh grade instead of waiting until ninth grade. "The school literally said to the parents, 'You find us twenty students and we will open the school,'" Michael noted. Today, the middle school has sixty students and there is talk about adding grade six.

"You can't see the school from anywhere in the world," said Michael. "We had to find a way to make ourselves visible. We are completely hidden from view on this beautiful 2,400-acre campus." So the school embarked on a very aggressive marketing campaign that included market research, brochures, billboard advertising, magazine and newspaper advertising and community outreach. The campaign's focus was summed up in five words: "Academic Rigor and Spiritual Growth." The admissions staff was expanded from one part-time person to four people.

According to Mullin, all these efforts would be window dressing if it weren't for the quality of the program. The Prep School's academic integrity and leadership have the school poised to become world-class. True to its mission as a preparatory school, ninety-eight percent of its graduates go on to post-secondary school.



As the school plans for the future and works on building and maintaining a superb faculty, enriching program quality and ensuring affordability, it is always mindful of its relationship to and dependence on its sponsoring community. "The greatest gift the Prep school could receive is an increase in the number of vocations to the monastery," Michael said. "We care about increasing vocations. If we don't, it makes everything else we do exceedingly difficult."

With close Benedictine ties to the abbey, the university and members of the monastery who are teaching at the school, Saint John's Prep is truly imparting Benedictine values. "The students are here learning and living among a couple of hundred people—the monks—who have dedicated their life to seeking God," Michael noted. "There is a cumulative effect to that and even without realizing it you are adapting Benedictine ways." +

More Monastic Terms

by Patrick McDarby, OSB



Formation Director: This monk does what the novice master and the junior master used to do, namely, teach and guide the novices and junior monks in the history, principles and practices of monastic life in general and at Saint John's in particular. It is a daunting job, so he calls on many members of the community to help him with lectures, conversations and retreats.

the abbot, accepts or rejects applicants for membership in the community and decides matters such as the expenditure of any significant sum of money and the establishment of new monastic houses. The chapter yearly approves the monastery's budget. Saint John's chapter meets in the chapter house, a building attached to the abbey church. †

In the last issue of *The Abbey Banner* I defined some monkly terms commonly used at Saint John's, focusing on people. Here are a few more.

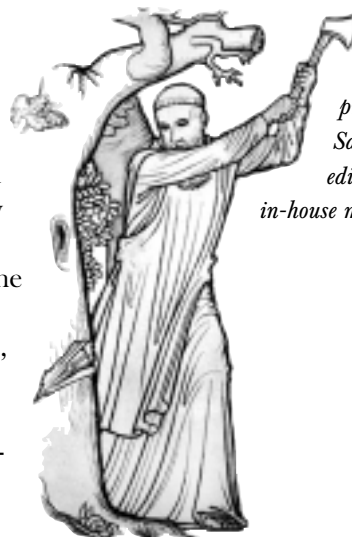
Monastic: The adjective for all things having to do with monasteries, including the men and women who commit themselves to a monastic community. Since the seventeenth century the term has been used in English as a generic noun for such men and women, and it is more specific than nun. So men and women who live by a monastic rule are monastics.

Subprior: A kind of junior vice-abbot, in rank if not in age. At Saint John's the subprior has been for many years a non-ordained monk, a brother, who is the immediate superior of those monks in solemn vows for less than fifteen years. He is the one the young monks go to for personal budget negotiations and permissions for most things other than leaving campus for a few hours. The prior deals with the monks over fifteen years solemnly professed.



Oblate:

A person, man or woman, who affiliates with a monastery but lives away from the monastery and observes, so far as he or she can do so in personal circumstances, the principles, specifics and spirit of the *Rule of St. Benedict*. The oblate has a year of probation to study the *Rule* before making a public promise to model his or her life upon Benedictine values. The director of oblates maintains contact with them and invites them to the abbey for an occasional day of reflection or a longer retreat. For more information about oblates please contact Father Allen Tarlton, OSB, Director of Oblates.



Patrick McDarby, OSB, is professor emeritus of English at Saint John's University and editor of Confrere, the abbey's in-house monthly newsletter.

Claustral Oblate: An oblate who, by the consent of the community and the abbot, lives in a monastery, following its routine of worship and work, but does not make a vowed commitment.

Chapter: A group of monastics who meet periodically, sometimes daily, to transact significant community business. The term is derived from the custom of beginning the meeting by reading a *chapter* of the *Rule of St. Benedict*. This is a monastery's deliberative body and is made up of all monks who have taken final vows. The chapter elects



These images in the monastic dining room are drawings by Clement Frischauf, OSB, in the early 1930's and depict the monastic life.

The drawings were photographed by Hugh Witzmann, OSB.



Linda Arnold, Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry student in the School of Theology•Seminary and YTM team mentor, works with her youth team member, Andrew Burklund. Both are from St. Marcus Parish in Clear Lake, Minnesota.

A Summer Program for Youth in Theology and Ministry

by Margaret Wethington Arnold

What happens when spirited high school students and their adult mentors team up at Saint John's during the summer for an intensive introduction to theology and ministry?

In Winona, Minnesota, they coordinate a "senior prom" for the elderly of their parish. In Bismarck, North Dakota, they give gift packages containing items encouraging spiritual reflection and faith formation to new mothers. In Platte, South Dakota, they start a parish youth group. In Tyler, Minnesota, they create opportunities for young people and senior citizens to learn from each other as part of an inter-generational program.

Youth in Theology and Ministry (YTM), a Saint John's School of Theology • Seminary program for high school youth, brings together teams of two young people and one adult mentor. They attend two two-week summer institutes to organize and implement a service project in their home parish.

The program allows youth to focus on faith formation and ministry in the

church, share their faith with peers in a supportive environment and nurture religious vocations. Participants especially appreciate the opportunity to spend time at a Benedictine monastery and experience the monastic focus on prayer, community life and hospitality.

Jeff Kaster, YTM's director, comments on the program: "There is an important value of having this program located within this Benedictine monastic setting. I was reminded of this when I talked with an adult YTM participant from Alaska about the possibility of expanding the program to the Anchorage Archdiocese. She said, 'We could duplicate the program in Alaska, but we could not duplicate the setting of Saint John's. I hope you realize how important this Benedictine monastic setting is to the success of YTM.'"

The nearly 200 participants in last summer's program included 72 youths, 34 mentors, faculty and staff of the School of Theology and the undergraduate theology department, members of the abbey and students of Saint John's University and the College of Saint Benedict. The



program's success is attributed to the team structure of two youth and one adult mentor who attend together from a parish or Catholic school. "We are doing what Jesus did when he sent out his disciples two by two," Kaster said.

The interaction between the mentors and youth is essential. The mentors model the possibility of a vocation as a priest, religious or lay minister in the Church as well as the importance of ongoing theological education for an effective ministry. Young people need the instruction, counsel and example of adults to take their Christian vocation seriously and to experience the friendship and encouragement of their peers.

Kaster explains the origin of YTM: "Three years ago I was invited to discuss ideas for engaging high school youth in theology. The critical question was, 'If the School of Theology • Seminary were given a million dollars to engage youth in theology and to encourage future Church leadership, what should we do?' The Lilly Endowment generously supported our answer to that question with an original \$1.2 million grant, and it has awarded us another \$600,000 to continue the program."

Now beginning its third year, YTM is accepting applicants for the 2002 Summer Institute, June 9-22. For more information please contact Jeff Kaster at 320-363-2620 or jkaster@csbsju.edu. +

The YTM staff administered a survey to youth participants at the beginning of the program and again when they completed the process in order to gauge growth or change that emerged from their involvement. Parents were also asked to acknowledge this growth through their own survey. Below is a sample of questions and responses.

My involvement in youth programs has very much helped me improve family relations:

*Youth percentage growth - 130%
Parent acknowledgment of growth - 43%*

My involvement in youth programs has very much helped me do service projects to help others:

*Youth percentage growth - 98%
Parent acknowledgment growth - 71%*

I have considered becoming a priest, sister or brother:

*Youth percentage growth - 56%
Parent acknowledgment growth - 21%*

I would like very much to study social justice:

*Youth percentage growth - 65%
Parent acknowledgment growth - 43%*



Carrie Anderson, a YTM youth team member from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, poses with Sister Angelo Haspert, OSB, a faculty counselor.



Walter Kieffer, OSB, cuts a hole in a sugar maple tree for a spigot to direct the flow of the sap into a plastic bag or bucket.

photos by Robin Pierzina, OSB

Sap-Tappers Start Syrup Season Setup

by Daniel Durken, OSB

Under the direction of John Geissler, assistant director of Saint John's Arboretum, and Stephen Saupe, professor of biology at Saint John's University and the College of Saint Benedict, the 2002 maple syrup season began at Colleagueville on March 3.

With the assistance of Brother Walter Kieffer, OSB, former syrup supervisor, and a crew of monastic and student volunteers, some six hundred five-gallon pails were attached to maple trees in the Sugar Bush area of the Saint John's woods near the Minnesota Public Radio antenna. Prior to attaching the pails, half-inch-wide metal

spigots had been inserted three inches into the tree trunks to direct the flow of the sap.

As the sap rises from root to branches with the arrival of warmer weather it slowly drips into the pail at the end of the spigot. When the pail is full the sap is dumped into barrels located along a trail through the woods. The barrels are then emptied into a tractor-drawn tanker that carries the sap to the central processing shed. There the sap is slowly cooked until it thickens and becomes syrup.

The syrup is bottled in gallon glass jugs and later packaged in pint containers for distribution as gifts to relatives, friends and benefactors. The rest of the syrup is used in the monastic and student dining rooms.

At the peak of the sap-syrup season it takes about twenty gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. This ratio is increased to as high as forty-to-one towards the end of the season that usually lasts about a month, depending on the weather. Ideally temperatures should fluctuate between a daytime high of forty degrees to a nighttime low of twenty-six degrees.

The monastic community began Operation Maple Syrup in 1942. To date the best year for syrup production was 1985 when 560 gallons were harvested from 1,950 taps and 20,000 gallons of sap.

Brother Robin's photos here and on the following page provide a pictorial account of the process. +



Plastic bags collect the sap of the maple tree. When sugar-toothed squirrels gnawed through the plastic, the bags were replaced by hole-proof buckets.



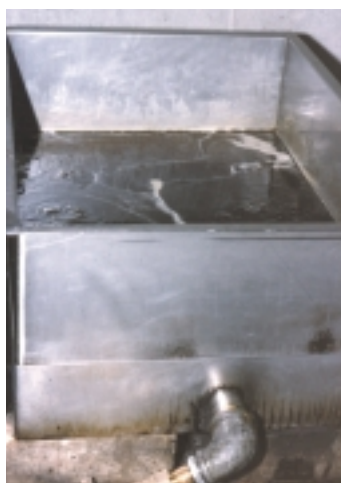
Cletus Connors, OSB, empties a bucket of maple sap into one of the collection barrels.



A tractor brings a load of sap to the Sap-to-Syrup Shack at the edge of the sugarbush area of Saint John's woods.



Firewood heats the unit that cooks the sap until it turns to syrup.



Maple syrup simmers in the finishing tank.



The finished product—genuine Saint John's Maple Syrup. Bring on the pancakes!



Nick Schicker (l.), a 2001 SJU graduate, works with James Tingerthal, OSB, in the abbey woodworking shop during last summer's Monastic Experience.

photo by Andra Van Kempen

Monk for a Month

by Joseph Feders, OSB

When I was preparing to direct my first Monastic Experience in June 1999, one of my confreres shared his theory about the type of men who would be joining us.

“Normally, one-third of the guys are interested in monastic life and may be considering Saint John’s Abbey. Another third are interested in religious life or the priesthood and they need time away to consider their call. And the remaining third would like to include ‘monk’ on their resume.”

The experiences of 110 young men who have joined us since 1984 as Monastic Experience Participants (or MEPs as they are called in the house) seem to confirm his theory.

A number of former MEPs have entered the abbey as candidates, and some of these men have made Saint John’s their home, including David Rothstein, Simon-Hoa Phan, Edward Vebeun, Isidore Glycer, Peter Habenczius and Christopher Fair.

Others have returned to Saint John’s to continue their studies in our university. Still others have joined religious orders or been ordained diocesan priests. And some Monastic Experience alumni are just proud to say they lived the life of a “monk”—for a month.

So what happens during a Monastic Experience? Each day the MEPs join the monks for prayer, work, meals and socializing. Another important component of their month with us is the formation of their own community in a campus dormitory.

Our guests live the Benedictine motto of “Worship and Work” by praying the Liturgy of the Hours and celebrating daily Eucharist with the monastic community, and experiencing work in common and the support of our life together. Two-hour assignments each morning and afternoon allow the MEPs to work side-by-side with monks in the gardens, sacristy, woodworking shop, abbey house-keeping or offices.

No one is born a monk, so the MEPs participate in classes similar to those taken by our men in formation, covering topics such as prayer, the psalms, the *Rule of St. Benedict* and the history of

Benedictines in general and of Saint John’s Abbey in particular.

On day trips to several of our parishes, our guests explore Saint John’s service to the local community, and learn about the fascinating church architecture of Stearns County.

The Monastic Experience culminates with the celebration of the Feast of Saint Benedict on July 11 when the community and the participants celebrate the profession of final vows of our newer members and the profession jubilees of our senior monks.

Our Monastic Experience is offered each summer, June 16–July 13. The program is designed for single Roman Catholic men, ages 18 to 32. The number of participants is limited, and early applicants receive preference. There is no cost for the program other than travel expenses to and from the Abbey, and travel assistance is available. For more details and contact information, visit www.saintjohnsabbey.org. +

Joseph Feders, OSB, is the Vocation Director of Saint John’s Abbey.

Shaun Sommerer was a dinner guest in the abbey refectory (shown here) in February and was later introduced to the monastic community.

photo by Andra Van Kempen



Estate Planning Is for Everyone

by Shaun Sommerer

As the newly appointed Director of Development for Saint John's Abbey I am prepared to assist friends of the monastery in the integration of gift planning into your broader estate plans. Because you are a regular reader of *The Abbey Banner*, I trust I am not being presumptuous if I briefly discuss the importance of good estate planning. Without such planning, your estate will not accomplish the good it could have.

For example, if you work 40 hours a week, for 48 weeks a year, for the 45 years between your twentieth and sixty-fifth birthdays, you will have worked 86,400 hours to assemble your estate. It is therefore important and worthwhile to plan how you will use your retirement funds and how you will pass your estate on to individuals and to charitable institutions (such as Saint John's Abbey) that you care about.

A major and basic document in any estate plan is a will, or a revocable trust. Only fifty percent of those who die in a given year have an up-to-date will. If you were to die without a will the court distributes your assets according to the laws

of your state of residence. Without a will, you have no voice in the disposition of the possessions you worked a lifetime to acquire.

Many professionals can help you with your estate planning. They include your attorney, personal financial planner, bank trust officer, insurance agent, accountant and stockbroker. If you wish to include charitable gifts in your estate plan, a planned giving professional can be a valuable and helpful ally.

It is important to interview potential advisors before you engage their services. You might ask whether they specialize in estate planning, how they are compensated and if they can give you references.

My role as the Director of Development for the abbey is to assist you and your advisor in the your estate planning. I can show you many different ways in which you can make a current or estate gift to Saint John's Abbey. Assets such as stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit (CDs), real estate, life insurance, art and jewelry can be appropriate assets to give away. I can help you and your advisor to understand the best asset to use to be tax

efficient and to meet your gift-giving criteria.

The preparation of a last will and testament can be difficult. But it is also a wonderful opportunity to make a final statement about matters that mean a lot to you. Most of us can make our largest individual and philanthropic gifts through our estates. Those gifts can have long-term impact on the people and institutions you care about. Your will can be a valued expression of your stewardship and a pledge of your continued support of the abbey.

If you wish to discuss your estate planning with me, I can be reached at 320-363-2369 or at my e-mail address: ssommerer@csbsju.edu. +

Shaun Sommerer is the Director of Development and External Relations for Saint John's Abbey.



Abbot Primate Notker Wolf, OSB, Buddhist monk Shoten Minegishi, Kieran Nolan, OSB, and Shinto priest Yutaka Kawakuchi

photos by Neal Lawrence, OSB

Benedictines of the Pacific Rim Meet in Japan

by Kieran Nolan, OSB

Thirty-two Benedictines of the Pacific Rim met at Holy Trinity Monastery, the Japanese foundation of Saint John's Abbey, October 21-24, 2001, for the fifth biennial meeting of Benedictine Superiors of East Asia (BEA).

Prior Peter Kawamura, OSB, and the Fujimi community welcomed their guests from monasteries in Australia, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan and Viet Nam.

The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways of helping each other. Mother Angelica Leviste of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters in Manila facilitated the discussion about support programs for new communities.

The theme of the meeting was inter-religious dialog. Keynote speaker Abbot Primate Notker Wolf, OSB, of Rome focused on "Benedictines in Search of Their Identity in Modern Cultures." He

stressed the importance of monastic values such as humility, poverty, obedience, silence and community life, values that Benedictines can share with the modern world.

A Shinto priest, Yutaka Ishikawa, briefly introduced the Shinto religion that has no canon of dogma, no scripture, no founder, but is transmitted through daily behavior.

Shoten Minegishi, a Buddhist monk who has accompanied Buddhist monks on a spiritual exchange with European Benedictines, shared his reflections on twenty years of inter-religious dialogue. The Buddhists were delighted to discover many similarities in Benedictine communities even though there were differences in religion, history and culture.

Professor Gyo Furuta, former member of Saint John's Abbey, shared his challenge of translating the Latin of the *Rule of St. Benedict* into colloquial Japanese.



Prior Peter Kawamura, OSB



“Difficulties were abundant, with the most problematic term being *Deus* (God). The term used today by Christians and non-Christians for the Christian deity is *Kami*, an indigenous Shinto term first employed to express the Christian God when Protestant missionaries came to Japan in the mid-nineteenth century.”

The international tone of the BEA meeting was well reflected in the daily liturgies. Hymns were sung and Scripture read in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamese as well as English. The gathering was an oriental Pentecost, declaring the mighty acts of God throughout the Pacific Rim.

Thanks to a volunteer staff of friends of the monastery, guests were served outstanding Japanese food such as fish, bean

soup, tofu, tempura, sukiyaki, noodles, rice and tea. The rice bowl and chopsticks replaced the western plate, knife and fork.

An evening of entertainment included selections on the Japanese harp, a cello-flute duet by the Abbot Primate and William Skudlarek, OSB, and a Japanese drum concert by a Fujimi township musical team.

Following the BEA meeting, the Benedictine Commission on China met to continue its work with the Vatican to foster communication with the Catholic Church in China. The Benedictines of Saint John’s Abbey, Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and the Abbey of Valeremo in California have been connected with the Church in China since

the early twentieth century. Timothy Kelly, OSB, Abbot President of the American Cassinese Congregation, is a member of this commission.

The meetings concluded with special words of thanks to the monks of Fujimi for their hospitality. The monks of Holy Trinity Monastery joined Prior Peter in a deep bow of thanks that all had gone well. In the words of Confucius, “Is it not delightful to have friends from distant quarters?” +

Kieran Nolan, OSB, is a member and former prior of the Japan community.



Participants of the 2001 BEA meeting celebrated the Eucharist in the chapel of Holy Trinity Monastery, Fujimi, Japan.



Hurricane Michelle's 90-mph winds blew the roof off Saint Augustine's College bookstore.

photos by Mel Taylor, OSB

Hurricane Michelle Batters the Bahamas

by Daniel Durken, OSB

Prior Mel Taylor, OSB, flew through torrential rain and wind from his weekend pastoral assignment on Cat Island to arrive safely in Nassau the day before he and his confreres, Fathers George Wolf, OSB, and Fintan Bromenshenkel, OSB, hunkered down at Saint Augustine's Monastery to weather out the fury of Hurricane Michelle that battered New Providence Island on November 5, 2001.

After sweeping over Central America and Cuba with 135-mph winds that killed fifteen people, the storm weakened to Category One over Nassau with 85-90-mph winds that were still strong enough to blow the roof off the bookstore of Saint Augustine's College and uproot many large trees on the campus.

The athletic fields at Saint Augustine's were inundated and the entrance road was impassible due to a flood that covered a pick-up truck to its windows. Most of the island's 200,000 people were affected by power outages.

Fortunately there were no human fatalities resulting from the storm. A Nassau doctor remarked, "We are lucky. We think God is a Bahamian or at least has a Bahamian passport."

Abbot John Visits Saint Augustine's

Abbot John Klassen, OSB, and Mr. Michael Mullin, liaison for Saint John's and Saint Augustine's College, visited the Nassau monastery and school January 17-20. In consultation with Prior Mel and Fathers George and Fintan it was agreed that they would reduce their presence in the college by fifty percent by the

end of June 2002, and completely cease their employment there by the end of this year.

This decision was made in order to begin the orderly transfer of day-to-day operational work to the administration of the college with oversight by the recently established Board of Advisors. The Board has been strengthened by the addition of several excellent members. The Executive and Finance Committees have begun to function and governance documents are being prepared.

The independence of the school as a separate juridical person within the Archdiocese of Nassau should be established by June 30, 2004. †



The hurricane brought flooding in its aftermath, high enough to cover most of this truck in front of the house at the entrance road of the monastery.

Obituaries

Aloysius Reinhart Michels, OSB
1913—2002

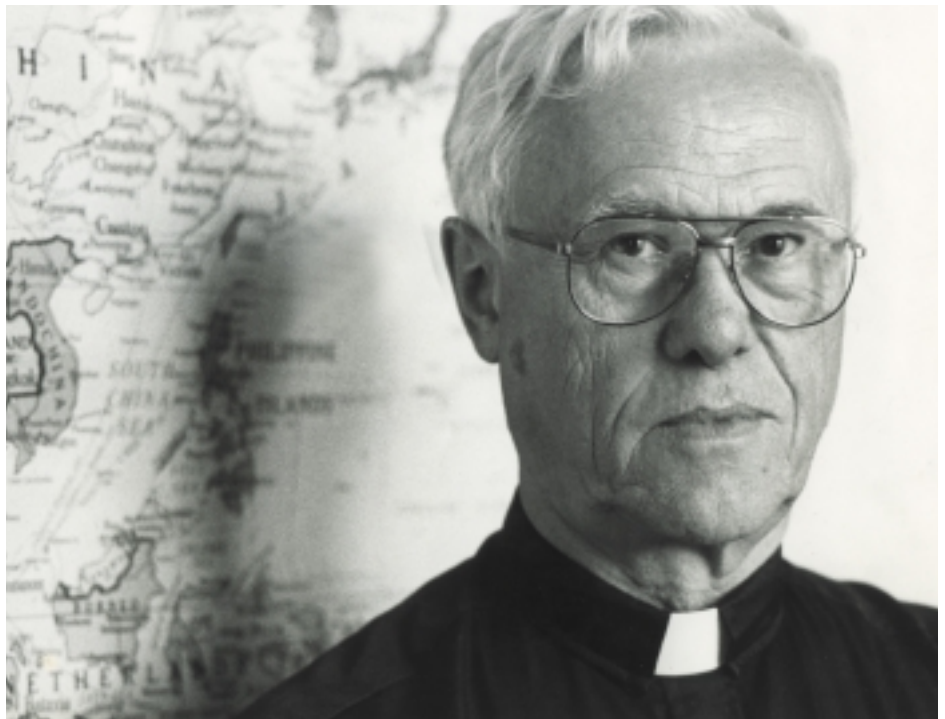
At the funeral of Father Aloysius, Prior Raymond Pedrizetti, OSB, reminded the community of the variety of the deceased's assignments during his over sixty years as a priest.

Aloysius served as associate pastor and then pastor of parishes in Richmond, Minneapolis, Cold Spring, St. Joseph, Avon and St. Cloud. He was an army chaplain, an English teacher at Saint John's and a prefect of college priesthood students. He played a significant role in the establishment and growth of the abbey's mission in Japan. He served as chaplain of a Benedictine community of women monastics. He was the abbey's director of novices and vicar for pastors and chaplains. He recorded and assigned Mass intentions at the abbey.

The assignment that was closest to his heart and made him most memorable was the almost thirty years he spent in Japan, first as pastor and prior of Saint Anselm's Church and Priory in Tokyo and later as pastor of a petite parish in Fujimi.



The Church of St. Joseph, Fujimi, Japan, where Father Aloysius worshiped and lived



Aloysius Michels, OSB
photos from Abbey Archives

Aloysius' first contact with Japan was as a chaplain of the First Cavalry of the United States Army stationed in post-war Japan. During a visit to Tokyo he became acquainted with two European Benedictines who had established a Catholic parish there before the war.

In a letter to Abbot Alcuin Deutsch written shortly before his return to the States in early 1947, Aloysius expressed the optimism he felt for the Christian evangelization of Japan:

"I believe that Japan can become for Asia what England once was for Europe, a land of Apostles. Because of their bitter defeat the Japanese are trying to find a new philosophy of life, something to replace their old religion of patriotism. Anything American they devour. They are crowding the doorsteps of the missionaries; if there were enough of the latter here now I believe that all Japan could be converted overnight. And Japan would convert the Orient."

Putting his optimism into practice, Aloysius volunteered to return to Japan.

Like a sturdy oak in a delicately designed Japanese garden, he began his pastoral ministry among the people he loved and who loved him. He cherished Japanese ways. One summer he took a weeklong hike and returned proud of the fact that no one he met on the way ever thought him to be other than a Japanese.

When the Tokyo community decided to establish a more contemplative setting for its worship and work, Aloysius was instrumental in selecting the city of Fujimi, located in sight of Japan's famous Mount Fuji. For two years he was the pastor of St. Joseph's Church there. He called it "the smallest parish in Christendom" with an average of ten people in the congregation on Sundays. When the new Holy Trinity Monastery at Fujimi was completed in 1999, Aloysius served as the community's porter.

(continued on next page)

Aloysius Michels, continued

Cancer of the liver necessitated his return to Saint John's where he died February 2, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. He truly deserved to pray with the righteous and just Simeon of that day's Gospel, "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, a light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:29-32).

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Father Aloysius on February 5. Considering the International Date Line, it was February 6 in Japan and the feast of St. Paul Miki and Companions, the sixteenth-century Japanese Jesuits, Franciscans and lay people who were martyred in Nagasaki. Aloysius had rejoined those whom he had so fervently and faithfully loved and served.

May he rest in peace. †

**Remember our loved ones
who have gone to their rest:**

- Roger Abler**, Oblate, October 8
- Marie Thamert**, mother of Father Mark, OSB, November 6
- Virginia Freeman**, sister of Brother Frank Kacmarcik, OblSB, November 18
- Lucille Elkow**, Oblate, December 4
- Ray Maiers**, brother of Father Brennan, OSB, December 15
- Frances Wagman**, step-mother of Father Stephen, OSB, January 13
- Daniel Hanson**, brother of Brother John, OSB, January 13
- Charles Robertshaw**, Oblate, January 22
- Hildegarde Kremer**, sister of deceased Father Columban, OSB, January 29
- Ed Murray**, retired faculty member of Saint John's University, February 2
- Maria DeLeon Guerrero**, Oblate, February 2
- William Schermerhorn**, father of Brother Xavier, OSB, February 5
- Julia Stein**, sister of deceased Father Benjamin, OSB, February 8
- Lester Stovik**, brother of deceased Father Jordan, OSB, February 17
- Julia Danzl**, sister of deceased Father Arthur Danzl, OSB, February 23
- Arthur Ward**, father of Father Daniel, OSB, February 25
- Bernard Soukup**, brother of Fathers Gregory and Gervase, OSB, March 9
- Patrick Zahler**, Oblate and employee of Saint John's, March 9
- Jeanne Coleman**, sister of Father Virgil O'Neill, OSB, March 11

**Bring them and all the departed
into the light of your presence,
O Lord.**

**Godfrey Leo Diekmann, OSB
1908—2002**

Not many monks of Saint John's can lay claim to a 383-page biography. But none would deny that Father Godfrey deserved such a detailed documentation of his life as that composed by Kathleen Hughes, RSCJ, and entitled *The Monk's Tale* (The Liturgical Press, 1991).

Nor would anyone deny that Godfrey was special. Consider that his profession of solemn vows on July 11, 1929, was made at the Abbey of Monte Cassino to the abbot-bishop of that venerable monastery. Also present were the Cardinal of Naples, seventeen bishops, four abbots, two hundred priests, the monastic community and a church full of visitors, all who had gathered to celebrate the 1400th anniversary of the founding of that abbey by St. Benedict.

Or consider that when Godfrey was ordained on June 28, 1931, by the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, there were sixteen priests, thirty-three deacons, twenty-six subdeacons, and a large number of candidates for minor orders ordained with him.

After receiving his doctorate in theology in 1933 from the International Benedictine College of Sant' Anselmo in Rome, Godfrey returned to Saint John's to begin six decades of teaching, preaching, editing and traveling. For him to teach theology was not to teach *about* God but to teach God. Students described his classroom presence as "enthusiastic, vivacious, stimulating, deeply religious, exuberant, passionate."

Godfrey's association with Virgil Michel, the Benedictine pioneer of the liturgical movement in America, set the agenda for his future work. When

Michel died in 1938, Godfrey became the editor of *Orate Fratres*, later renamed *Worship*, the premiere journal of liturgical and pastoral renewal. He gained national and international attention that culminated in one of his crowning successes—the drafting and implementation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of the Second Vatican Council.

Aging gracefully but impatiently, Godfrey looked forward to the heaven of eternal life—not just eternal rest—where he would experience God with the ecstasy of honeymoon love. He died on February 22, the Feast of the Chair of Peter, and just two days before the Second Sunday of Lent.



Two old friends met in Rome on June 10, 1996. The one on the right is Pope John Paul II.

The Gospel of that Sunday featured the transfiguration of Jesus and harmonized with

Godfrey’s conviction that “the whole of Christian life is the celebration of one word—transfiguration.” The main point of his teaching was to make students realize that Christianity means real transformation by sharing the gift of God’s life as true sons and daughters of God.

May he rest in peace! +



That is not an over-inflated volleyball but a gigantic puff ball mushroom held by Father Godfrey. He was the abbey’s chief harvester of mushrooms, water cress and wild leeks that added flavor to the monastic table.

photos from Abbey Archives

Abbey Announces Administrative Appointments

by Daniel Durken, OSB

Saint John's Abbey has announced four new administrative appointments in recent months. They are as follows:

Shaun Sommerer is the abbey's new director of development and external relations.

Shaun, 39, grew up in Canby, Minnesota, and is a 1984 chemistry graduate of Saint John's University. He received his doctorate in the same field of study from Florida University and taught that subject at Penn State and at Barry University where he chaired the chemistry and physics department.



Shaun Sommerer
photo by Greg Becker

In 1999 he became the Director of Development for the Diocese of New Ulm. He successfully directed a \$4.5 million capital campaign for the support of the retirement fund for the priests of the diocese. Two years ago he accepted the position of Director of Development for the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library at Saint John's.

The main focus of Shaun's work is to build and maintain relationships with the families and friends of the abbey and thereby to insure adequate financial resources to sustain and advance the work of the monastic community.

Shaun and his wife Debra live in Albany. His campus phone num-

ber is 320-363-2369. His e-mail address is ssommerer@csbsju.edu.

James Tingenthal, OSB, has been appointed the administrator of Saint Leo Abbey, St. Leo, Florida, for a three-year term by Timothy Kelly, OSB, Abbot President of the

American Cassinese Congregation of Benedictine men. Father James succeeds another Saint John's monk, Simeon Thole, OSB, who was appointed to the same position in 1996 when the Saint Leo community requested administrative assistance

in light of their limited resources of leadership.

James, 67, completed his high school, college and seminary education at Collegeville, made his initial commitment to the Benedictine way of monastic life in 1995 and was ordained in 1961. He

earned a Master's degree in mathematics from Boston College and from 1960-72 taught that subject at Saint John's Preparatory School. He served as headmaster of the Prep School from 1972-74.

For the next eleven years, 1974-85, he was the Physical Plant Director at Saint John's. From 1985-98 he worked as the Director of Events and Conferences for the Collegeville campus. For the past

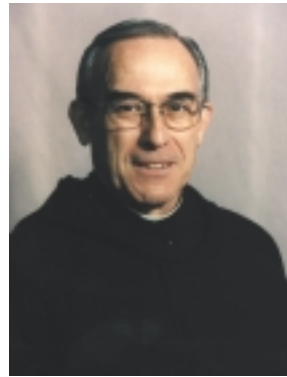


James Tingenthal, OSB
photos by David Manahan, OSB

three years he has been a furniture maker in the woodworking plant of Saint John's.

William Skudlarek, OSB, has assumed duties in the newly created position of Administrative Assistant to Abbot John and also Director of

Priestly Formation in the School of Theology • Seminary. The primary goal of the new position is to free Abbot John from some of the pressure of correspondence, committee meetings and external relationships so he may spend more time on community matters.



William Skudlarek, OSB

William, 63, made his first profession as a Benedictine monk in 1959 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1964. He earned the doctorate in homiletics from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1976. In addition to teach-

ing that subject he served as the chair of the undergraduate theology department and as the dean/rector of the School of Theology • Seminary.

From 1985-90 William did pastoral work in Brazil as an associate of Maryknoll missionaries. He then joined his confreres in Tokyo and Fujimi, Japan, and served in the pastoral ministry to Brazilian workers with Japanese con-

nections and as chaplain to foreign prisoners in Japan's largest prison. In 2000 he was awarded the Order of the Southern Cross, Brazil's highest honor for foreigners who have made a contribution to the Brazilian people.

William is chair of the Board of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue that is preparing for a major conference at the Trappist Abbey of Gethsemani in April on the theme of suffering. He plays cello in the St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Center Chorale and Orchestra and the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra.

Richard Oliver, OSB, has been named publicist of Saint John's Abbey to suc-

ceed Daniel Durken, OSB. Brother Richard, 56, first professed his monastic vows in 1970. He earned a Master's degree in library science from the University of Iowa.

Richard spent almost six years in England and Germany microfilming medieval manuscripts for the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library. In 1995 he became a Cyberspace pioneer by creating some of Collegeville's first web sites and currently is the webmaster for the Order of Saint Benedict. He also serves on the executive board of the American Benedictine Academy and heads its Benedictine Internet Technology Section.



Richard Oliver, OSB

He is responsible for the dissemination of newsworthy events of the abbey to local and national media. +

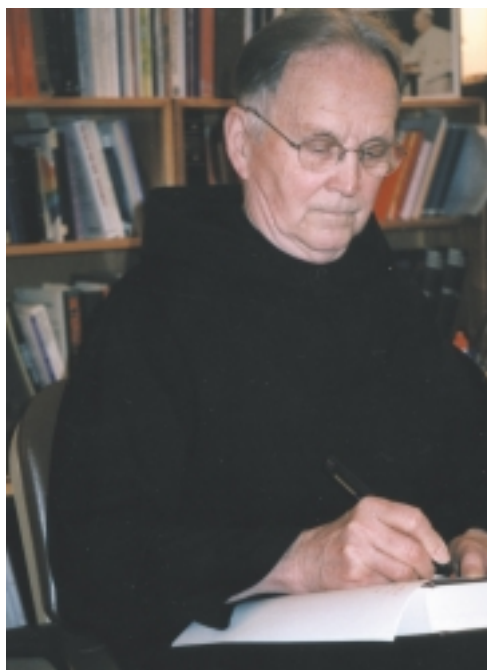


photo by Patrick Henry

Ecumenical Institute Honors Founder

by Patrick Henry

sor emeritus in 1992, decided to honor him in an unfamiliar way.

The usual—gathering the honoree's contemporaries to read papers at each other—seemed inappropriate for one as visionary as Kilian. Instead, younger people were asked to write essays or poems and submit them for prizes. Because the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was such a defining event for Kilian's career as theologian and ecumenist, "younger" was taken to mean anyone born on or after January 25, 1959, the day on which Pope John XXIII publicly announced that he would call a council.

To encourage curiosity and passion for topics central to Kilian's scholarship, three themes were proposed for essays: The Holy Spirit, Ecumenism, and the Renewal of Theology. Five years ago

Kilian started writing poetry and has produced an astonishing array of excellent poems in a variety of styles (see the article "Senior Monks Publish Poetry" by Hilary Thimmesch, OSB, *The Abbey Banner*, Spring 2001, pp. 12-13), so poetry was added as a fourth category.

There were 164 entries in all. Eighteen prizes were awarded. In mid-April the winners, who range in age from 18 to 42, will be brought to Collegeville to meet Kilian and each other as well as resident scholars of the Institute and the faculty of the School of Theology • Seminary. +

Patrick Henry is the Executive Director of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research at Collegeville.

How do you celebrate eighty years of life, fifty-five of them as a monk, fifty as a priest? Kilian McDonnell, OSB, reached all these milestones in 2001.

The Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, which Father Kilian founded in 1967 and still serves as its president, and the Saint John's School of Theology • Seminary, in which he taught from 1964 until his retirement as profes-

photo by Alan Reed, OSB

Great Hall Mural Restoration

by Alan Reed, OSB

During January the apse mural in the Great Hall was cleaned and restored to its original color and brilliance. A team of five conservators from the Upper Midwest Conservation Association in Minneapolis, led by senior paintings conservator David Marquis, and including Donna Farrell, Elizabeth Buschor, Joan Gorman and William Skodje, spent part of the month teetering on sixty-foot high scaffolding, cleaning and repairing the surface of the sixty-by-forty foot painting.

Painted with oil and beeswax over a plaster surface, the mural was done in the style of religious art that had its origin in the nineteenth century at Beuron Abbey. This German abbey was a school of religious art focused on revitalizing liturgical art by emphasizing theological principles over naturalistic representation.

Dedicated on May 19, 1934, the apse mural by Clement Frischauf, OSB, who studied at Beuron, illustrates traditional imagery of the figure of Christ the Almighty holding the book open to the quote “I am the way, the truth and the life.”

Below that is a representation of Christ as the Lamb of God surrounded on either side by lambs representing the twelve apostles. Further below are angels shielding their eyes in reverence to the celebration of the Eucharist that before 1961 occurred directly in front of them when the altar was in the apse.

The team of conservators loved working on the image and believe it is one of the great mural paintings in the state. In conversation with them their respect for Brother Clement’s skill became apparent. Working so closely with the painting, they could discern his techniques and sense when an assistant did the original work rather than the confident hand of Clement himself.



The process of restoration involved removing surface dirt accumulated over the almost seventy years since it was painted. Working cautiously to remove the accumulation of candle and incense smoke and other atmospheric dirt, the conservators were careful not to remove original color or luster.

In many places, more involved restoration included in-filling of cracks in the plaster and surface areas, and rectifying earlier attempts to “touch up” the painting. Most noticeable since the restoration is the brilliance of the large area of gold leaf surrounding the figure of Christ and the overall clarity of the image.

Marquis said he was amazed by the detail that Clement painted in an image that would be seen only from a great distance. The restoration has clarified that detail and made the whole of the image appear in sharper focus, and after seventy years, restored the image to its glorious original condition. +

Alan Reed is the curator of art and artifacts for Saint John’s Abbey and University.



photo by Tim Post, MPR

Representatives of the Benedictine brother-sister tradition are, l. to r., Gen Maiers, OSB, Gracemarie Maiers, OSB, and Brennan Maiers, OSB. In the background is a picture of St. Scholastica, the work of Japanese artist Sadao Watanabe.

photo by Daniel Durken, OSB



A Benedictine Tradition Continues

by Daniel Durken, OSB

In Pope St. Gregory's *Life and Miracles of Saint Benedict*, the delightful story is told of the yearly visit of Benedict and his sister Scholastica. On one such visit, the couple prayed, ate and conversed well into the night.

When her brother would not hear of their "talking about the joys of heaven till morning," Scholastica rested her head on the table and accompanied her prayer for the prolonging of the visit with a flood of tears. The ensuing lightning, thunder and heavy rain prevented Benedict from leaving, and the holy pair spent the entire night "exchanging holy thoughts about the interior life."

This tradition of a yearly visit of Benedictine sisters and brothers has been continued to this day. Each year on or about February 10, the feast of St. Scholastica, the Saint John's monastic community is invited to Saint Benedict's Monastery in nearby St. Joseph for prayer, a meal and a visit.

Conscious of the original homeland of Benedictines, this year's celebration had a distinct Italian flavor. Following Evening Prayer a small chorus of women monastics set the tone with two traditional Italian songs, "Finculi Fincula" and "Santa Lucia." A tasty dinner was served

with desserts available in the community room.

The "Scholastica Singers" returned to parody several Italian favorites such as "O Sole mio/ Chow chow, bambino/ Three pounds per kilo/ serra, serra." After a spirited sing-along and with no rain or snow to impede travel, the party ended at 8 p.m.

A bit of research reveals that ten living monks of Saint John's Abbey have blood sisters in Saint Benedict's Monastery. They are:

*Knute and Ingrid Anderson
Simon, Loraine and Margo Bischof
William and Frances Borgerding
Gregory and Lavonne Eibensteiner
Brennan, Gen and Gracemarie Maiers
George and Colette Primus
Alan and Patrice Reed
Wilfred and Vivian Theisen
Arnold, Jane, Bernadette, Helen and
Marcella Weber
Hugh and Clare Witzmann*

One good party deserves another, so in early August the community of Saint Benedict's Monastery will be the guest of Saint John's Abbey for an annual cook-out. And the tradition will continue. +

Daily Scriptural Reflections Available

Don Talafous, OSB, SJU alumni chaplain, has completed his Scripture guides for the weekdays of the two-year cycle of Mass readings published in the *Loose-leaf Lectionary* of The Liturgical Press. The reflections run through October of this year.

Available at the Saint John's University Alumni website: www.csbsju.edu/sjualum/, under the heading "Daily Reflections," are short meditations by Father Don for every day of the week. They are usually based on a passage from Scripture or from his years of service as chaplain to the university's undergraduates.

A limited edition of *A Word for the Day*, a popular book of reflections by Don, is once again in print. For inquiries or orders please phone The Liturgical Press at 1-800-858-5450. The book is also available at the Saint John's Bookstore, 320-363-2494. +



photo by Robin Pierzina, OSB

SJU Students Take a Look at Abbey Life

Saint John's Abbey hosted nine undergraduate students of Saint John's University for a Monastic Experience Program, January 9-13, just before the start of the Spring semester. During that time the students lived in the monastery and participated in prayer, work, meals and recreation with the monks to

gain a deeper understanding of Benedictine life.

Front row, left to right: Brother Zachary Wilberding, OSB, coordinator; Kyle Katoski, Duluth; Tommy O'Keefe, Edina; Kevin Lally, St. Paul; Jeff Sommerfeld, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin; Paul Just, Sisseton, South Dakota.

Back row, left to right: Chaz Fautch, Burnsville; Scott Crumb, Glenwood; Matt Hoffman, St. Paul; Thomas Jones, Albertville. +

The Showy Lady Slipper

by Don Montgomery

How delightful it was for me to open the fall issue of *The Abbey Banner* and see on page 26 Father Hugh Witzmann's exquisite color photograph of a pair of Showy Lady Slipper blooms!

A bit of trivia for your readers is that my grandfather, Harry A. Montgomery, introduced the bill to protect that plant, Minnesota's state flower, known as *Cypripedium reginae*, Latin for "Slipper of the Queen." On March 4, 1925, Harry, the long-time Minneapolis Northside's Representative at the State Capitol, introduced H.F. 880,

a bill to protect and conserve "certain wild plants," and "imposing penalties for the violation of the provisions of this act."

Specifically the law (Chapter 409, Minnesota Laws of 1925) made it a misdemeanor "to buy, sell, offer or expose for sale the state flower (*Cypripedium reginae*), or any species of lady slipper, or any member of the orchid family, trillium of any species, lotus, gentian, arbutus, or any species of lilies, or any thereof, dug, pulled or gathered from public land, or from the land of any private owner

without the written consent of such owner or other occupant of such land." +

Don Montgomery is a 1951 graduate of Saint John's Preparatory School.



A group of "Showy Lady Slippers."

photo by Fran Hoefgen, OSB

art by Placid Stuckenschneider, OSB

The Deeds of the Holy Spirit

by Donald Tauscher, OSB



With Easter Alleluias still ringing in our ears and with Pentecost on the near horizon, let's reflect on some samples of what the Holy Spirit does. One page will not cover all that the Spirit is and does, but it's a start.

1. As God, **the Holy Spirit is our advocate**—on our side, on our behalf, always uniting the members of Christ's Body, always active in all God's children, not just Christians. This is the principal work of the Holy Spirit: to be our comforter, our advocate, the life force of God in us. So, the Holy Spirit gives us life in community. We live by the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).

2. **The Holy Spirit is our teacher.** Jesus said, "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you" (John 14:26). I think we all can—or at least should—appreciate how the Holy Spirit enlightens our minds so that we are able to find the faith to believe what God reveals to us. The Holy Spirit guides, directs, illumines, inspires and increases our knowledge and love. Some theologians say that the Holy Spirit is progressively emerging from deep within us and letting God's light shine in the larger community.

3. **The Holy Spirit helps us pray**, not just by teaching us a few things about prayer, but by actually praying in and with us. Listen to Saint Paul, that giant of the faith: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit

intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26-27). Hidden in this verse is the insight that the Holy Spirit "teaches us" to be quiet, to be still, to listen, to stop chasing words and ideas. To let go and let God. To practice Sabbath stillness for rest and restoration.

4. **The Holy Spirit strengthens us** in tough times of opposition or even persecution. Jesus repeatedly admonishes his followers not to be afraid but to take courage. "And when they bring you to trial and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say; but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit" (Mark 13:11).

5. **The Holy Spirit strengthens us to resist temptations**—all temptations to sin. All sin harms the Body of Christ; all sin disrupts the unity of the community. In these days of global terror, the Holy Spirit must work unceasingly to overpower the human temptation to become separate, to exclude others, to discriminate against others as though they really were not equal or worthy. The Holy Spirit protects and supports our fundamental unity, our oneness in Jesus Christ.

6. **The Holy Spirit forgives sin.** By forgiving sins that wound and divide, the Holy Spirit removes obstacles and barriers to the free and loving expression of our fundamental unity in the Body of Christ. Note that in the Rite of

Reconciliation the absolution formula includes the declaration that "God, the Father of

mercies, . . . has sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins." Remember the Gospel of John (20:22-23) where, on the night of the Resurrection, Jesus breathes on the disciples and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. . . ."

7. Of course, by living within us, as in his Temple, **the Holy Spirit makes us holy**, transforms us more and more into the very image of the Lord God. This happens not by what we do but what the Holy Spirit does. That's why the Holy Spirit is called the sanctifier.

There is a good deal more to the Holy Spirit than this page contains. We could, for example, fill another page with references to the Holy Spirit as we find them in sacramental rites (such as the one reference above to the Sacrament of Reconciliation). Then, of course, after considering the Holy Spirit's job description, we could also consider the job description of the person who "lives (i.e., derives life) by the Spirit." We just might do that! +

Father Donald Tauscher is the Director of the Spiritual Life Program of Saint John's Abbey.

Calendar of Events

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| April 24 | “Architecture, Art and Sacred Space,” a Marcel Breuer Centenary Event | June 23 - July 11 | Third Annual National Catholic Youth Choir |
| Mid-May - Mid-October | “The Saint John’s Bible: In the Beginning was the Word,” Hill Monastic Manuscript Library | June 28-30 | Saint John’s Preparatory School’s Alumni/ae and Friends Reunion |
| May 12 2 p.m. | Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation for Saint John’s University, Commencement Speaker: Congressman Mark Kennedy, Pax Christi Award Recipient Bishop John Kinney | June 30- July 4 | 17th Annual Monastic Institute, “Cross-Generational Issues in Monastic Life Today” |
| May 22- July 28 | Exhibit of Marcel Breuer’s drawings, models and artifacts | July 11 | Feast of Saint Benedict: Profession of Solemn Vows and Renewal of Vows by Jubilarians |
| May 25 10 a.m. | Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation for Saint John’s Preparatory School, Commencement Speaker: Carl Schlueter of the Prep faculty | July 12-14 | Retreat for Oblates of Saint Benedict |
| May 30- June 1 | Hamm Clinic’s Conference on Mental Health, Spiritual Development and the Arts | August 4 | Reception and Picnic with the Monastics of Saint Benedict’s Monastery |
| June 2-7 | Saint John’s Abbey Community Retreat directed by Abbot Jerome Kodell, OSB, of Subiaco Abbey, Subiaco, Arkansas | August 6 | Reception and Picnic with the Clergy of the St. Cloud Diocese |
| June 9- August 9 | Saint John’s Prep Summer Camps: Leadership, German, Theater-Circus Arts, Art-Nature, Environmental Science, Sports | August 26 | Classes begin for Saint John’s Preparatory School |
| June 9- 22 | Youth in Theology and Ministry | August 28 | Classes begin for Saint John’s University |
| June 16- July 13 | Saint John’s Abbey Monastic Experience for single Catholic men, 18-32 | September 14 | Monastic Profession of First Vows |
| June 17- July 26 | Summer Session of Saint John’s School of Theology • Seminary | | |
| June 20-23 | Marcel Breuer Architectural Symposium | | |
| June 22-28 | The Calligraphy Connection | | |

Abbey Prayer Time

Visitors are welcome to join the monks for daily prayers and Eucharist. Seating: choir stalls west of altar. Seating for Sunday Eucharist is in the main body of the church.

- | | |
|---------|------------------|
| 7 a.m. | Morning Prayer |
| 12 p.m. | Noon Prayer |
| 5 p.m. | Daily Eucharist* |
| 7 p.m. | Evening Prayer |

* Saturday Eucharist, 11:30 a.m.
Sunday Eucharist, 10:30 a.m.



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